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## JANUARY 1992

**THE FOREIGN RELATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY OF SPAIN: A SURVEY FOR 1992**

**Anthony Gooch**

**FIGHTING FOR THE MIDDLE GROUND**

**Paul B. Rose**

**THE GURKHAS: SOLDIERING ON**

**George Evans**

**THE SOUNDS OF SUFFOLK**

**Geoffrey Heptonstall**

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# Contemporary Review

## incorporating The Fortnightly

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## THE FOREIGN RELATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY OF SPAIN: A SURVEY FOR 1992

**by Anthony Gooch**

1992 is seen as a decisive year for the destiny of Europe, but for one country in particular, it has a significance which, stemming from the past, both deepens and transcends the vision of her future in the European Community. 1992 is going to be a Spanish year. Madrid will be 'Culture Capital' of Europe, Barcelona will host the Olympic Games, and, above all, Seville, historic bridge between the Old World and the New, will be the site of the Expo World Fair.

Five hundred years ago, in 1492, Columbus, making landfall in what we know to-day as the Bahamas, initiated a vast Hispanic odyssey, while, in that same year, Queen Isabella of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon, having created a united kingdom, completed the reconquest of their land from the Mohammedans by taking Granada.

Later, Charles V and Philip II were to forge the first great European Empire, bringing under the sway of Spain extensive areas of Europe itself, something approaching an entire continent to the West and large dominions in the East: an Empire on which the sun never set. However, in the seventeenth century, Spain dipped into a trough of decline, apathy and isolation, social strife, civil war and dictatorship, from which she was not fully to emerge until well into the second half of the twentieth century.

To-day, however, a dynamic, democratic Spain, in the EC and in NATO, is eagerly taking her place amongst the nations. King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofía, Prime Minister Felipe González and Foreign Minister Francisco Fernández Ordóñez have travelled extensively throughout the world, renewing old links and building new ones, carrying far and wide the message that the days of isolation are over and that Spain is once more a nation to be reckoned with.

The threshold of 1992 is thus a juncture at which it is singularly appropriate to initiate a survey of Spanish Foreign Relations and Foreign Policy, a survey which can conveniently be presented in five articles throughout this 'Spanish Year':

1. Spain and the Arab Connexion
2. Spain and Latin America
3. Spain, the United States and NATO
4. Spain, Western Europe and the EC
5. Spain, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

## SPAIN AND THE ARAB CONNEXION

In the year 711 the first wave of Mohammedan invaders swept into Visigothic Spain under Tarek Ibn Said, thereby initiating what was to become nearly 800 years of close contact — of intermittent warfare certainly, but also of intermarriage and civilization. The land which gave birth in Roman times to Hadrian and Trajan, to Seneca and Martial, was to become in the 9th and 10th centuries, under the Caliphate of Córdoba, a byword for learning, culture and refinement, at a time when Northern Europe was in a state of semi-barbarism. Arab influence and the influence of Arabic spread far and wide, permeating most deeply in the South (Andalucía) and the East (Levante). The Spanish language contains some 4,000 words of Arabic origin; the landscape of Spain is bespattered with names that speak of that same source: Madrid, Medina and Calatayud, Alcalá and Alcántara, El Guadalquivir and La Mancha. The name of the great hero of medieval Spain — El Cid comes from the word 'sidi' (leader). And El Cid fought not only against the Arabs but sometimes in alliance with them. It is one of the great love/hate relationships of history, and in modern times it has developed into one of the linch-pins of Spanish foreign policy.

In 1462 the Christian forces took Gibraltar — Gebel Tarek (The Rock of Tarek), which Queen Isabel la Católica, in her Testament, asked and required of her successors that they should 'hold and retain for themselves, and in their own possession'. She and King Fernando looked upon Gibraltar as 'la llave de estos reinos entre los mares' — the key to their dominions between the two seas. They might have added, 'and the key also to the Maghreb' — the Western end of the Arab world comprising to-day Mauretania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya.

In the 19th century Spanish generals such as O'Donnell and Prim, the latter called *el Soldado de Africa*, fought over and held considerable areas of the Maghreb. When in France they were saying 'L'Afrique commence aux Pyrénées', in Spain they were saying 'España llega hasta el Atlas' (Spain reaches as far as the Atlas Mountains).

In the 20th century General Francisco Franco built up a strong power base in Morocco, important elements of which were *la legión española* and *la guardia mora*. North Africa was Franco's gateway into Southern Spain in 1936, and North Africa remains the gateway into Southern Spain now. The Spaniards are ever-mindful of this fact. In World War II, Franco,

despite his sympathies, wary of the Axis, and, because of his sympathies, *persona non grata* to the Allies, finding himself with scarcely a friend beyond Salazar of Portugal, strove assiduously to cultivate *la hermandad hispanoárabe* (the brotherhood of Spaniards and Arabs).

The democratic governments of Spain have continued on the same course, and, today, Felipe González, a son of Seville, doubtless with more than a dash of Arab blood in his veins, regards friendship and co-operation with the Arab nations as a high priority.

**Morocco, Ceuta and Melilla, Spanish Sahara, related areas and the issue of Decolonization**

There were, of course, and indeed still are one or two flies in the ointment, mainly in relation to the immediate neighbour Morocco.

The Spanish Protectorate in Morocco, set up in 1912, was relinquished in 1956, but there remain on the Moroccan coast two important enclaves, Ceuta and Melilla, which came into Spanish hands in 1580 and 1470 respectively. For such possessions English sometimes uses the Spanish term *presidio* or military post or establishment. However, the Spaniards, significantly, call these territories *plazas de soberanía*, which means that they do not look upon them as being in any sense colonies, but as forming an integral part of the Sovereign State of Spain. Moreover, in the sphere of practicality, they consider them to be perfectly defendable.

Hassan II of Morocco, desiring to incorporate Ceuta and Melilla into his kingdom, has from time to time called for their 'decolonization'. The Spanish Government, with all due respect, counters by stressing their view that such claims are based upon a misconception of the status of the territories in question. Only if Ceuta and Melilla were to come to have a majority Moroccan population, would Spain be prepared to discuss the issue. But that is not all. Spain sees a degree of linkage with the issue of Gibraltar, and, here, understandably, she considers the term *descolonización* only too appropriate. Once Gibraltar is returned to us, say the Spaniards, we may be prepared to discuss Ceuta and Melilla. Certainly not before. In the meantime Spain would like her North African possessions to come under the umbrella of NATO. At the moment only their harbours and territorial waters do so.

Ifni, another Spanish enclave, was handed over to Morocco in 1969. It was never felt by Spain to be Spanish in the sense that Ceuta and Melilla are. Moreover, it was not an easy territory to defend — a fact even more true of the Spanish Sahara.

In October 1975 King Hassan organized what came to be known as 'La Marcha Verde'/'La Marche Verte' — a vast mobilisation of civilian Moroccans who marched on the Spanish positions in the Sahara inviting their own slaughter or capitulation by the Spaniards. Franco being terminally ill, Don Juan Carlos went to the Sahara to ease matters with the commanders in the field, and withdrawal was agreed for January 1976, Spain retaining a 33% share in the phosphates which constitute the main wealth of the area. Morocco, Mauretania and the Polisario Front, supported by Algeria, were left to settle their differences. Spain's subsequent

recognition of the Polisarios, given in order to secure the release of Spanish fishermen taken prisoner by the Front, has led to some tension.

Off the West Coast of Africa stand the Canary Islands, a most attractive property, and, here again, King Hassan has, from time to time, made aggressive, annexatory noises. In 1968 the OAU called for the 'decolonization' of the islands, but Spain regards the Canaries as no less an integral part of the Spanish State than the Balearics. On the other hand, in that same year of 1968, as palpable earnest of the sincerity of her decolonization policy, where she considers that process to be properly applicable, Spain granted independence to her possession Equatorial Guinea. It is worthy of note that the concept of decolonization and specific issues of decolonization constitute a key area of contemporary Spanish foreign policy.

Despite past friction, relations between Spain and Morocco are now good. Hassan, *'notre ami le roi'*, has always pulled back from the brink. He is a pragmatist who knows that, if Morocco is to continue to market her produce in Europe, it would not be wise to push Spain too far. On 4th July 1991 a Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between the two countries, specifically stipulating peaceful negotiation as the means for settling all disputes, was signed by Felipe González and the Moroccan Prime Minister Azzedin Laraki, the proceedings being rounded off by speeches from Don Juan Carlos and Hassan II. It is now many a long year since the Patron Saint of Spain, St. James, appeared in any official text with the embarrassing traditional epithet of 'Slayer of Moors', which harked back to the days of the Reconquista. *Santiago Matamoros* is now strictly confined to the history books.

Thus we see at the Western end of the Mediterranean and in adjacent areas a complex political game involving, as prizes, Gibraltar, Ceuta, Melilla, the Western Sahara and the Canary Islands; as players, Spain, Great Britain and the Gibraltarians, Morocco, Mauretania, Algeria and the Polisarios; as factors, considerations of patriotic sentiment and economic interest, 'sunk cost effect' and competing alliances. It is not a game of such great international implications as that played at the Eastern end of the Mediterranean, but for Spain it is one of paramount importance and one requiring the deftest touch her political leaders and diplomats can muster.

Moving East from Morocco and Algeria, we come to Tunisia — with which relations are good — and so to Libya.

**Libya and Egypt**

The situation with regard to Gadaffi's Libya is awkward. Spain's denial of airspace to the US for the 1986 air strike on the recalcitrant Colonel inevitably created considerable tension between Madrid and Washington. To boot, Madrid suffered no little embarrassment when Gadaffi expressed official thanks to Spain for her 'positive attitude' to Libya in her hour of need. All the more embarrassing were such thanks coming from a man who had been repeatedly reported to have links with ETA and who had spoken of the creation of a pan-Arab world that would include an

Andalousia reclaimed for Islam. 'Ex Africa semper aliquot novi.'

Not without interest either are Spain's relations with Egypt, which are very good. Both Spain and Egypt have a very special relationship with the Arab world and with the United States and a particularly delicate relationship with Israel. Felipe González and Hosni Mubarak have a lot of international problems in common, and one senses that they have a natural rapport. Egypt was once a great power and a pinnacle of civilization. Spain once had within her a pinnacle of Muslim civilization and once held the greatest empire in the world. In Cairo many Spaniards, especially, of course, if they are Andalousians, feel at home. They may not speak Arabic, but it has a familiar ring, and so do the temperament and life-style of the Egyptians.

As with previous Spanish governments, the policy of the present socialist administration is to foster the special relationship with the whole Arab world. Today Spain sees herself as the great bridge, the great interpreter linking that world to Europe and vice versa.

**Israel**

To the north-east of Egypt lies Palestine/Israel. Spain's traditional policy in the area has been one of friendship and support for the Palestinians, including the PLO.

As a result of the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War, Franco was seen as fascist or at least pro-fascist and pro-Nazi. Franco in fact made it possible for many Jews to escape the Nazis through Spain, and it is said that there is Jewish blood in the Franco family, as there is, of course, in many Spanish families. Nevertheless, in view of the PLO connexion and the Nazi Germany connexion, not to mention the expulsion of the Jews from Spain at the end of the fifteenth century, Israel's attitude to Spain was highly negative — 'No wonder,' said Foreign Minister Fernando Morán, on one occasion, 'in view of the kind of régime we had in this country' (i.e. Francoism).

But democratic Spain, in NATO, seeking admission to the EC — in other words with an increasingly Atlanticist, European stance — began to find her position of non-recognition of Israel as uncomfortably anomalous among the attitudes of Western European nations.

The Socialist Government had an advantage over those before it. There was positive contact between the PSOE and the Israeli Labour Party. Felipe González and Shimon Peres (cf. Sp. Simón Pérez) found they could do business together. On 17th January 1986 Spain and Israel granted each other formal diplomatic recognition. There was some rumbling from the Arab world, but, in general, the move was accepted as logical and inevitable.

**Spain and the Gulf Conflict**

*1. Before the outbreak of hostilities*

The Government declared that the Spanish commitment was to be logistic, economic, sanitary and humanitarian. There was to be support for the embargo on trade with Iraq in compliance with the UN resolutions,

and Spain was anxious to play her part, especially in collaboration with her EC partners.

Three warships were despatched for blockade duties, but with orders not to engage in fighting in the event of a shooting war breaking out. Only an Iraqi attack on Turkey would alter this position, because 'un ataque contra Turquía sería como un ataque contra Alemania' (an attack on Turkey would be like an attack on Germany), and in such an event NATO solidarity would have to be maintained, in consultation with Spain's EC partners.

Heavy criticism came from Izquierda Unida, Centro Democrático y Social and the Partido Nacionalista Vasco, who all demanded the withdrawal of the Spanish vessels. Leftist anti-Americanism was vociferous.

Support for the Government came from the Conservative Opposition Partido Popular and the Catalan Convergencia i Unió, who, however, considered the Spanish contribution to be inadequate. The Government countered that important logistic support was of far greater value than a token field force, as, indeed, proved to be the case. One defence analyst was to say this: 'The build-up couldn't have happened at the rate it did and re-supply couldn't have been guaranteed without Spanish support'.

*2. After the outbreak of hostilities*

The position for Spain was delicate. As a supporter of the UN's resolutions, a member of the EC and NATO, and as an ally of the US, Spain had to fulfil her obligations. However, her special relationship with the Arab world in general and with the countries of the Maghreb in particular impelled her to explain herself more fully than others. Felipe González's Government was at pains to stress that the war was against Saddam Hussein and in no sense anti-Arab, and pointed to the Arab nations ranged against Iraq: Morocco, Egypt, Syria, as well as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait itself.

But there was an ambivalent situation in the countries of the Maghreb, where governments in general officially supported the UN position, although with considerable reservations about US policy, while the populace was strongly pro-Saddam. This created difficulties for Spain.

When it became known that American B52s were using Spanish bases to bomb Iraq, the outcry in the Maghreb was such that Foreign Minister Francisco Fernández Ordóñez felt constrained to make a tour of the whole area to explain the Spanish position. The pragmatic and realistic Fernández Ordóñez found matching pragmatism and realism, and all was smoothed over.

In Spain itself the Government received a lambasting, especially from the Left and sectors of the media, not only for the granting of permission for the use of Spanish bases by the B52s, but perhaps even more for attempting to keep the whole thing quiet. There was much talk of the Government's *secretismo/hermetismo/mutismo/laconismo*, i.e. economy with the truth. It's all very well for people to theorize, said an exasperated Fernández Ordóñez, but 'yo estoy siempre a la intemperie, frente a la realidad' (I am always out in an exposed position, up against the actual

situation). The Government's position was consistent throughout, he claimed, but what about Felipe's call for a cessation of bombing at the very time the superforts were taking off from Spanish soil? There were awkwardnesses.

*3. After the cessation of hostilities*

The European response to the Gulf crisis was ragged. Spain is in favour of a Common EC Foreign Policy. 'What Europe needs is not less unity but more' (Fernández Ordóñez). Unless Europe is to continue to be dependent on and subservient to the US she needs political as well as economic clout. Really to come of age she must have not only a Common Economic Policy, but also a Common Defence, Security and Foreign Policy. This is Spain's position.

Spain is in favour of:—

(i) A Conference on Security in the Mediterranean and Middle East.
(ii) A Development Plan for these areas.
(iii) Armaments control (Spain, like so many other Western nations, has been guilty of arms sales to Iraq, and therefore has a conscience not entirely at ease).

In addition, in the sphere of the Arab/Israeli conflict, she feels she has a special role to play. Having traditional ties with the Arab world and now good relations with Israel as well, Spain considers herself to be in an excellent position to act as honest broker, using her good offices with both sides to urge flexibility and realism as the path to a pragmatic solution. Who better than Spain, once the land of *'judíos, moros y cristianos'*?

The choice of Madrid as the venue for the Middle East Peace Conference of November last year was clear vindication of Spain's policies in relation to the Arab nations and Israel, while at the same time being an acknowledgement of her history and a recognition of her international standing today. It was also a manifestation of the excellent relations obtaining between Don Juan Carlos, Felipe González and Fernández Ordóñez, on the one hand, and Presidents Bush and Gorbachev and James Baker, on the other.

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# AGAIN — A GERMAN PROBLEM

## by Leo Muray

EVENTS surrounding the Maastricht summit have shown more clearly the new German status. For the first time since the last war Germany is not under pressure. This is due to the unexpected coincidence of two major events: German unification and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. There is now a power vacuum from the Elbe river to Vladivostok. The risky uncertainties and unforeseeable clashes resulting from this makes Germany, a united, a stronger and more influential power than it would have been if the Soviet Union had survived. For the outsider the most significant, though otherwise a minor event, was the recent signing of an understanding between the Moscow authorities and the German Foreign Minister, Dr. Genscher, about the restoration of the German Volga Republic in the heart of the Russian Federation. Stalin had destroyed it by deporting two million Volga Germans. It is an acknowledgment of German power and influence.

For the East Europeans and the Soviet Slav Republics Germany is the country they are now turning to for advice and help. The US and Britain are too uncertain and France, despite President Mitterrand, is too weak. For these countries too a success of the restructuring of the five former East German Lands is very important. If it can be done there then there is some hope that it could be done in their countries too.

The Bonn government is making a truly impressive effort to bring the industrial productivity, the communication and transport system of the former East Germany, as well as its agriculture, up to the standards of West Germany.

This makes more urgent the obvious need to look for and gain new markets for the significantly enlarged industries. There will be competition from EC partners but it is almost taken for granted that the US with its aim of setting up a Common Market type Free Trade Area with Canada and Mexico, and sharpening competition along the Pacific Rim will, like Japan, not be fighting hard to compete with the obvious target of German increased exports and investments — Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. It is worth noting that the German Foreign Office has appointed a special Roving Ambassador. His main job is to find out on the spot what the needs and realities in every Republic are. Again, the visit of President Yeltsin to Germany in November has shown how far Bonn is prepared to go, to make markets safe.

The Bonn government is, naturally, giving priority to the needs of the new Lands regarding investment and support. A growth of 9.5% is now expected in East Germany this year after the drop of 11% in 1991. This has, naturally, influenced growth in West Germany where the 1992 growth is assessed at 2% compared with 3.5% in 1991. How difficult the task still is can be seen from the projected growth of unemployment by nearly a quarter in 1992 to 3.3 million, from 915,000 to 1.35 million in the new

Lands with only 17 million inhabitants and from 1.7 million to 1.9 million in the West. This while the minimum inflation rate will be around 4%. There is also pressure to cut average wage increases from around 7.5% to 5.5%. There is the prospect of a 5% budget deficit.

It is therefore fairly obvious that German attitudes to and policy in the EC is somehow a divided one. In terms of economic and international policy the needs arising from unification and, to a lesser degree, perhaps, Eastern Europe take priority.

German leaders remain very conscious of the German past. For them, therefore the EC is an almost desperately needed vehicle and instrument for German policy, internationally and at home. They can do more as a member than going out on their own. The fuss about recognition of an independent Slovenia and Croatia shows this. Germany wants a strong, properly integrated EC.

But it goes further than that. The Manifesto for the recent Dresden conference of Chancellor Kohl's CDU party stipulated that the EC must be developed into a Political Union with a common foreign and security policy and also into a Monetary, Economic and Social Union. For Chancellor Kohl there can be hold-ups but no turning back. Union in all these sectors, therefore, is now linked with the leadership of Germany in the EC. This is vital for the whole impact the EC is making in its negotiations and talks with the three groups of 'applicants', so to speak, the EFTA countries, the Baltic countries and the more advanced of the former members of the Soviet Bloc, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, whether it is full membership or some type of Association. Germany is the border country.

A new interesting aspect is now emerging. It is the prospect of gradually 'regionalizing' the members of the EC as integration advances. The regions, or Lands in Germany, should get greater powers. They should be protected against too much detailed interference. Here the famous 'subsidiarity' role produced in the Single European Act, comes into the picture. It says that the lower ranking authorities should decide on issues and actions where this is best. But the snag is that the Brussels Commission, that is the implication, will decide who should do what.

The German Land authorities are more aware of this than experts in other countries. They passed a unanimous resolution in the Upper House that they will not ratify any legislation on Political or Economic Union unless their rights are protected and guaranteed. A two-thirds majority is needed.

To ensure democracy the German Basic Law of 1949, the Constitution, sponsored by the Western Occupying Allies, gives real power to the now 16 Lands. The five new ones are now drafting their own constitutions and they are different. Some of them want to retain some of the provisions of the East German Constitution, on the school system in one case, for instance. All the Lands demand greater say in Brussels decision-making. Since the Lands differ widely in economic and population strength this is considered vital. The Lands are suspicious of the European Centralist State

they foresee.

There is now a Constitutional Reform Commission investigating changes. Saxony, the historically best founded new Land, has already proposed a radical restructuring of the Federal Republic. Only the strongest economically and in size, should be preserved: Bavaria, of course, Baden-Wurtemberg and North-Rhine Westphalia as well as enlarged Saxony, Thuringia and Berlin with what is left of old Prussia. Five Northern Lands, including Hamburg, Bremen and the Lands along the Baltic should become the new 'North-German' Land and the three along the Rhine and Saar should form another. There would thus be eight bigger Lands and not 16 as now. These would be better able to defend themselves. Here finance is a key issue. There is an Adjustment System that redistributes revenue between the Lands and the Federal Government. There is a constant struggle about the deficits of the Lands. By amalgamating the present weaker Lands into bigger units the Lands hope to gain a better bargaining position.

In this struggle there are faint memories of the German past; the First Reich of Charlemagne was a loose agglomeration of cities, dukedoms and principalities. The proposed European Political Union, could eventually be turned into something like that with stronger regional and weaker national governments and, unlike the old First Reich, a strong central authority in Brussels. It may be worth mentioning that Jacques Delors said in a recent interview that he considered the present European Union as 'a child of the Cold War' and that a strong European identity must be created.

The German leaders are, naturally, anxious to present their country as a solid successful liberal democracy. They are very sensitive about the upsurge of young — and old — Nationalist extremists — some of them neo-Nazis. There have been hundreds of nasty incidents against non-white 'guest workers' in particular, especially against Asian guest workers in former East German Lands. There is considerable pressure to introduce laws severely restricting rights to enter and to seek asylum. In the city elections in Bremen the extreme Right, whose neo-Nazi sounds are occasionally too obvious, gained for the first time seats in the local Assembly. There are more key elections this spring and one will have to see.

Another key issue is the change in the Constitution to permit the use of German troops abroad. With the Soviet forces disintegrating Germany now has the biggest army in Europe. The Social Democrat opposition is rejecting this. It is likely to become a test issue also because both the governing Christian Democratic Union of Chancellor Kohl and the Social Democrats have changed their men in key posts in the Bundestag, the Parliament. Chancellor Kohl now depends on continuing success. He has been putting his prestige to the test on the European issue, the law on immigration and on the lifting of restrictions on the use of troops.

There is a new sense of strength emerging. The Mayor of Dresden, for instance, wrote to London demanding that there should be no statue of 'Bomber' Harris, and one provincial newspaper in the East is called the

'Middle German Paper'. The term Middle German is used by those who feel that the real East Germany are the regions now forming Western Poland.

The growing strength and influence of the united Germany was shown at the EC European Assembly at Strasbourg when a motion, put by German MEPs and not by the Bonn government was passed increasing the number of German MEPs from 81 — the same as Britain, France, Italy — to 99 to take account of the increased population of Germany. The French government made it known that it disapproves. It makes the German contingent of Strasbourg the strongest. It could be linked with the determined efforts of Chancellor Kohl to increase substantially the powers of Strasbourg within the proposed European Political Union. The Maastricht Summit, however, does not appear to have worked the changes that will have to be embodied in the new Maastricht Treaty with its changes of the Rome Treaty. A test of strength therefore remains unsettled.

The dangerous uncertainties across Eastern Europe are a great worry. This is linked with the feeling that the US is very likely to reduce its forces to a dangerous minimum. The Christian Democrat Manifesto says that Germany stands to derive 'special benefits in building bridges of understanding and knowledge' with 'expellees and ethnic Germans who stayed in their areas of origin'. The Manifesto also suggests 'Euro-Regions' going so far as to list Saxony, Silesia (now partly Polish) and Bohemia (Czecho-Slovakia, of course), as one such possible region.

The Germans feel that their role is changing, that their stature has grown. They feel that developments in Eastern Europe and beyond will force them to take the lead in safe-guarding a minimum of order. The likelihood of dangerous upsets worries them. They need the presence of the nuclear forces of the Western Allies just in the background. They need the EC, the more strictly organized the better, as a framework. At the same time they want to maintain the right to use their resources as they see fit and not subject to the disposal of Brussels primarily. Bonn needs the EC as the genuine framework in which to operate by democratic and economic means, in the first place. The Germans need time to restructure their East, time to establish links with the erratic, sometimes unidentified, forces in that Eastern vacuum in order to be able to ward off the dangers threatening them and their partners.

The Maastricht Summit has been a test of strength for Germany showing how far its partners can be made to go. The timetable for introducing the ECU currency and its conditions prove Germany's need to gain time. The German public and politicians even are deeply worried, fearful about what will be the future of the Deautschmark. Germany's resources are now bound to be practically fully committed to save the economies of what was once the Soviet Bloc no matter the 'cohesion' aid demands of the Southern EC partners. For the rest of the decade the setting up of ECU will be in doubt as the struggle for the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty already shows.

# THE GURKHAS: SOLDIERING ON

## by George Evans

THE defence review which will cut Britain's regular army by 40,000, has dealt a harsh blow to Nepal. Implementation of 'Options for Change', the cost-cutting exercise announced by Mr. King, Defence Secretary, last summer will reduce the Brigade of Gurkhas by two thirds. This is a cause for deep concern not only in Kathmandu but in Britain for which generations of Gurkha soldiers have shed their blood in many wars. 'Never had a country more faithful friends than the Gurkhas' is how the Gurkha Welfare Trust, a British charity puts it in its insistent appeals for money to help ex-Servicemen and their families in need, often dire need, in Nepal.

History bears this out. The link between the British and the small, impoverished Himalayan state of Nepal, a special relationship if ever there was one, is unique. It was forged in war, a war moreover, which the Gurkhas lost. But despite that, Nepal — the only Hindu kingdom in the world with, for good measure, an old Etonian as monarch — has remained a loyal and dependable ally of Britain for nearly two centuries. This is a remarkable facet of Imperial history in that it was never a British colony and as an independent sovereign state, owes no allegiance to the Crown.

Wedged between India and Tibet on the southern slopes of the Himalayas with a population of 19 million and next to no natural resources apart from scenery and water, Nepal is one of the world's poorer countries. The Himalayas which include Everest and seven other peaks over 26,000 feet, cover a great part of the land. The majority of the Nepalese eke out a living from subsistence farming in the small, terraced fields carved out of the Himalayan foothills. No one dies from starvation but sixty per cent of the people are too poor to eat properly. The economy is heavily reliant on India which has never been averse to turning the screw when it suited New Delhi for political ends to do so. It is hard to see how Nepal could survive without foreign aid which accounts for more than 60 percent of the development budget.

Nepalese early history is a tangled web of fable and myth in which numerous petty warlords engaged in a state of permanent and usually very bloody conflict. Modern Nepal emerged as a nation only in the 18th century when it was united by Prithwi Narayan, the founder of the reigning dynasty. A determined and ruthless leader, he set about subjugating and annexing the three chief Principalities in the Valley of Nepal, including Kathmandu. In one siege he promised the defenders of a fortress an amnesty if they surrendered. When they did so he gave orders to cut off the noses and lips of all males over 12 years of age and then changed the name of the town to The City of Cut Noses. The Newar kings disappeared and the inhabitants of the Valley became a subject race.

The Gurkha kingdom ruled from Kathmandu continued to expand and by 1794 extended from Sikkim to the borders of Kashmir. Stopped by

the Sikhs on one border and the Chinese on the other the Nepalese turned their eyes on the fertile southern plains which they believed the East India Company — supposedly in an advanced state of decay — to be incapable of defending. This was a monumental mistake for which Nepal paid dearly. The Company, far from being a spent force, reacted vigorously to repeated border incursions by declaring war. Four divisions were ordered into the field, one of which commanded by General Ochterlony, finally defeated the main Gurkha army in the Garhwal Hills. An armistice was declared in 1815 and under a peace treaty signed the following year, Nepal gave up most of its territorial gains and agreed to accept a British Resident in Kathmandu. The British, greatly impressed by the valour and martial spirit of their erstwhile enemies, soon began to recruit them into the Indian Army. The first three Gurkha regiments, the forerunners of the Brigade of Gurkhas, were in fact wholly recruited from the ranks of the defeated Nepalese army.

The founder of modern Nepal, Jung Bahadur Rana, the first of a line of hereditary Prime Ministers, seized power in 1846 after a massacre of the leading nobles. The Ranas who ruled the country for more than a century kept the monarchy but relegated the role of the king to that of a ceremonial figurehead.

They took care however to preserve and strengthen the military link with Britain which grew steadily closer throughout the nineteenth century. In 1850 Jung Bahadur felt sufficiently strong to leave the country in charge of his brothers while he, breaking with religious and tribal tradition, made an official visit to England. His purpose at a time when the East India Company was still bent on expanding its dominions was to put down a marker demonstrating Nepal's status as an independent sovereign state. It was a calculated risk which nearly went wrong. In his absence a plot was hatched to murder him for offending religious beliefs by going overseas but fortunately for him it was discovered before he got back to Kathmandu.

In London he was received with the pomp and ceremony befitting his rank and — perhaps, more importantly — his potential use and future role in the Imperial scheme of things for the governance of India. If so it was a policy which paid rich and lasting dividends.

When the Indian Mutiny broke out in 1857 Jung Bahadur not only dispatched 4,000 troops to India to fight for the Company but played a major part himself in command of 8,000 troops at the Relief of Lucknow. For his services then and, later in Tibet, he was rewarded with many honours including a knighthood. In the years following his death which occurred in 1877, the Gurkha regiments expanded rapidly. More than 200,000 enlisted during the first World War, 20,000 of whom became casualties. On the outbreak of the last war Nepal again came forward unasked in support of Britain. Two brigades of the Nepalese army served on the turbulent North West Frontier, releasing British and Indian troops for the front line. A further three battalions fought against the Japanese in Assam and Burma. Nepal's main contribution, however, centred on the

ten Gurkha regiments of the Indian army in which 130,000 men served as well as another 30,000 who enlisted in other units. The roll of honour is long and illustrious, stretching as it does from the Western Front to the Western Desert and many lesser wars from the 19th century down to the present day, including the Falklands in 1982.

There were still ten Gurkha regiments each with four battalions in British service at the end of the war with permanent regimental centres in Indian hill stations such as Dehra Dun, Abbottabad and Quetta. When India gained independence in 1947 six were transferred to the new Indian Army which now has some 27,000 Gurkhas in its ranks, more than three times the number in British service. The four British regiments, the 2nd, 6th, 7th and 10th Gurkha Rifles, have five infantry battalions between them totalling with support arms some 8,000 men in all.

The planned rundown of the Brigade under 'Options for Change' will progressively reduce their number to 2,500 in a single large regiment made up of two battalions with three squadrons of Corps troops. There will be significant redundancies among officers and men. Generous compensation, pensions and resettlement grants will be paid, but to those who are sent back to Nepal the loss of a career and the prestige attached to the profession of arms will come as a bitter blow. There could even be worse in store when Hong Kong, their permanent base, is handed back to the Chinese in less than six years time.

Of the existing five battalions, one is on loan to the Sultan of Brunei who pays the Ministry of Defence £1½ million a year for it. Another is stationed near Aldershot as part of Britain's rapid reaction force. Service in England on a two-year tour of duty, (including six months in Belize), is a popular posting. With generous overseas allowances a rifleman probably earns as much as a Lt.Col. in the Nepalese army and a Queen's commissioned officer in the rank of major, as much as a Nepalese cabinet minister. The Gurkhas in their neat, off duty 'civvies' have become a familiar presence in the high street, widely admired for their discipline, impeccable manners and cheerful willingness to support good causes from laying on a curry lunch for the village fete to running in the London Marathon for charity. In Fleet, the Hampshire town nearest their barracks, the council named a new civic square Gurkha Square as a mark of the townspeople's esteem for the regiment.

The renowned discipline of the Gurkha soldier contrasts strangely with the public ferment and lack of discipline which has characterised Nepalese politics over the past forty years.

Until 1950 when the hereditary power of the Ranas was finally broken in a palace revolution, foreigners apart from a few favoured Everest climbers, were barred from entering Nepal. The era of the package tourist and the celebrated hippie trail to Kathmandu belonged to a far distant future beyond imagining. The experiment in rudimentary democracy which was introduced following the overthrow of the Ranas did not endure. In 1960 King Mahendra, fed up with political squabbling in which one cabinet succeeded another with bewildering speed, dissolved parliament,

banned all the political parties and assumed direct power with the stated aim of uniting the country.

A new constitution was ushered in providing for a party-less system based on elected village councils. But since these were often little more than willing tools in the hands of feudal landowners, that experiment also ended in failure. Street demonstrations demanding the restoration of parliamentary democracy erupted in violence in which scores were killed and injured. King Birendra who succeeded to the throne as an 'absolute and divine' monarch on the death of his father in 1972, was forced to give way. Yet another new constitution was promulgated this time stripping the king of absolute power and introducing Westminster-style multi-party elections. The general election which followed last April — the first such exercise in democracy for 32 years — returned the liberal Nepali Congress Party to power with 110 seats out of 205 in the new parliament.

This time on the principle of third time lucky, the universal hope is that democracy will take root. But even if it does, that alone will not be enough to lessen the grip of poverty or to redeem the promise of economic relief held out by Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala, the new hardline anti-Communist Prime Minister. Nepal needs help to achieve that goal, international help on a greater scale than it is getting now. It is not hard to see why the rundown of the Brigade of Gurkhas is a cause for dismay: it contributes up to 20 per cent of the gross national product through remittances, pensions and the revenue earned by Royal Nepal Airlines ferrying soldiers and their families to and from Hong Kong on leave. It is the loss of more than half this source of wealth over the next four years which offers such a grim prospect, unrelieved as it is by any hope of claiming a share in the so-called peace dividend which the ending of the Cold War has conferred on the world's richest nations.

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[George Evans, a journalist, served with the 10th Gurkha Rifles during the War.]

# THE RAJ AND ITS LASTING IMPACT ON INDIA

## by A. S. Raman

THERE is a 17th century book, *Kalagnanam (Knowledge of Time)*, in Telugu, the language spoken by the largest number of Indians after Hindi. It is a unique volume written by a unique man. Its uniqueness lies in its content: forecasts of events 300 years ahead of their occurrence. Its author was unique because he was a saint unlike any other saint — radical, down to earth, nondenominational, extremely humane, humble, honest and hard-working, uncompromisingly intolerant of the hypocrisies practised in the name of religion and fiercely committed to the establishment of a new social order based on castelessness and classlessness. His name: Brahmam for short. His full name: Pothuluri Veera Brahmendra Swamy of Kandimallayyapalli of Cuddapah district, Andhra Pradesh (1604-1690). He did odd jobs as carpenter, blacksmith, stone-carver and brick-layer for his livelihood.

Brahmam's prophesies are indeed amazing. They have all come true. He can be loosely described as the Indian counterpart of Nostradamus (16th century). Brahmam's magnum opus, *Kalagnanam*, is becoming more and more popular as a result of the recent researches conducted into his thoughts and sayings by a Gandhian institution, Anandasram, at Mydukuru in the Cuddapah district, under the direction of its dedicated secretary, V. Veerabrahmam who is interested in the subject because of its direct bearing on the British rule and Gandhi's fight against it.

For purposes of this article, the relevant passages from the *Kalagnanam* can be briefly summarised thus: white-faced men from abroad will rule Bharat (India) and rule well — there will be also a woman (Queen Victoria) among them. They will offer the common man many good things. Smoking carriages will run on iron rails (railways). Homes will be lit by energy released from water (hydroelectric power). People will be united and live in peace and harmony under strong, impartial administration. Ultimately, a man, Gandhi by name, will be born in the north. He will be from the trading community. He will lead the freedom struggle and receive acclaim from his admirers the world over. Fortified by his own faith in God and in the righteousness of his cause, he will use a mere spinning wheel and a sliver against the guns and cannons of the white men, he will drive them out of the country and he himself will die in the capital *(Eluru, the City of the Rulers)* at the hands of an assassin bearing the name of the elephant-faced God *(Vinayak Godse)*.

Rationalists may reject such intuitive anticipation as bunkum. One feels sorry for them. They are on the run in the Soviet Union. Their gods have failed — the Trinity of socialism, secularism and science. Rationalists think that one should not believe in anything that the human intellect with its limited range does not accept. How much can man understand? There are many things beyond science and technology: one can understand and even experience these only through spiritual discipline. It is

indeed incredible how Brahmam could describe the events of such a distant future with accuracy and authority. Of course, rationalists will say that his predictions are all interpolations. There is no evidence supporting this cynical view. The fact remains that the 17th century Indian mystic had a clear vision of 20th century India. His anticipation of the British rule and the national movement under Gandhi's leadership is telling testimony to his extraordinary powers of perception, penetration and prescience.

The British gave the Indians political freedom in 1947. But the latter have yet to give themselves the other freedoms — economic, cultural, social and intellectual. The Indo-British relationship formally ended on a very friendly note, in spite of the years of bitterness preceding it. The friendship between the two countries is firmer and happier than ever before, thanks to the many links that keep strengthening it all the time, links such as the Commonwealth, parliamentary democracy, English language, and collaboration in scientific, technical, industrial and cultural projects. With the kind of tensions and traumas that India has been going through since independence because of the venality and violence of her politics, one sometimes wonders whether the British left too soon. The general feeling is that things were never so bad under their rule as they are today, though politicians, the biggest beneficiaries of independence, think otherwise. They have never had it so good, but at what price?

Admittedly, the situation in pre-independence years also was bad, but not as bad as it is today, whatever the reasons. There were certain graces and decencies which enriched the quality of life. There was pursuit of perfection in every area of human endeavour with the result that the Indians paradoxically reached greater heights under colonial rule than today. To take a few examples: literature at its best was represented by Tagore, art, by Amrita Sher-Gil, science, by Dr. C. V. Raman and S. Ramanujan, education, by Asutosh Mukherjee, politics by Gandhi and Nehru and administration by the Indian Civil Service. Their post-independence successors, by contrast, have achieved so little. The challenges of those days stimulated competitive excellence while those of today seem to breed only manipulative professionalism. Not that the pre-independence generation was genetically superior to the present-day Indians. It is more a matter of ambience than genes. For example, Dr. Hargobind Khorana, who later won the Nobel Prize as a US citizen, could not get placement even as a junior scientist at a government-run research establishment in Delhi.

Jawaharlal Nehru was a great champion of British concepts, traditions and institutions. In fact, intellectually he was more British than Indian, though emotionally he was more Indian than British. He represented a happy synthesis of the British elan and the Indian ethos. No wonder that he spared no effort to strengthen the roots of the British traditions and institutions transplanted to the Indian soil under the British rule. As a result, democratic culture acquired a new tone and trust through his efforts. Parliament became strong through healthy encounters between

the ruling party and the opposition. The press raised its voice fearlessly because of the power and authority that democratic freedom vested in it. Judiciary enhanced its stature by functioning independently with dignity and integrity, untroubled by an authoritarian and irresponsible executive. Naturally the rule of law became a way of life instead of remaining a mere paper guarantee on statute book. Foundations were laid for rapid scientific and technological development and modernisation of industry and agriculture. All this was possible because of Nehru's progressive ideas shaped by the British Left, particularly the Webbs and the Fabians. Nehru's love of the English language was another positive factor in the making of the new India in the British mould.

The quarrel was, not with the language and culture, but with the politics of Britain. In fact, the more sophisticated Indians even tried to assimilate the quintessence of the British ethos in the hope of beating their rulers at their own game. They wanted to prove that whatever an Englishman did, they could do better. No wonder that India produced such fine writers and speakers in the language of their conquerors: V. S. Srinivasa Sastry, Jawaharlal Nehru, Surendranath Baneerji, C. Rajagopalachari and of course Gandhi.

Patriotism no doubt rarely produces great literature. It does so only when it fuels creative imagination to a feverish pitch. However, politics and creativity are not made for each other. On the contrary, the two cancel each other out. The main purpose of political writings is to rouse people to action so that they assert their rights and privileges within the legitimate constraints of a democratic framework. However, I must add a rider. In the pre-independence years, the Indian leaders used English, not for rousing the masses who did not understand the language, but for spreading the message of national struggle among students, academics and civil servants across the country as well as for presenting India's case for freedom to an international audience. Paradoxically, the language of the British colonial oppressors has integrated the Indians beautifully into a nation, while India's own languages such as Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Kannada, Assamese, Telugu, etc., have splintered her people into ugly, warring little Indias. I'm not suggesting that the Indian languages had no positive role to play in stepping up the freedom struggle. Of course, they did by strengthening the movement at the grassroots. Only their post-independence record has been negative. English continues to be a cementing, even civilising, force in the sense that it is the only medium through which India can have the benefit of international exposure. Though many Indian universities have switched to regional languages as media of instruction, the more far-sighted among them sensibly retain English for the purpose. With the Hyderabad-based Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages and similar outfits in other parts of the country becoming stronger and stronger and with the growing expansion of the English language press and through the resolute efforts of the British Council, the English language will stay. There is no threat to it whatsoever. One redeeming feature is that those who oppose it publicly with vehemence

are its strongest supporters privately. They are the first to send their children to English medium schools. Another example of doubletalk so characteristic of the post-independence generation. No wonder that more and more Indians writing in English are achieving international recognition in a very big way. Compared with their present number, their pre-Independence counterparts were only a handful — not more than half a dozen.

It is tragic but true that while the British gave India unity, the Indians since independence have destroyed it. The first mistake that we made was by reorganising provinces on linguistic bases. These new militant pockets of regionalism and chauvinism are at the root of many of India's present ills. The focus under the British rule was inevitably on strong central rule which alone could hold the country together. But now the perspective has changed with the units emerging as feuding identities, the one claiming superiority over another. Basically, no doubt, the Indians have inherited a sound and foolproof administrative framework, though it was primarily conceived as an instrument of colonial rule. The methods, procedures and systems which the British have bequeathed to the Indian bureaucracy are still in vogue. But their application is marred by insensitivity to their inherent checks and balances due to excessive politicisation of administration. All the British traditions are more or less unchanged, except for minor cosmetic touch-ups relevant to the post-independence situation. The legal system (Indian Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, *habeas corpus*, etc.), the educational establishment, the fiscal apparatus, the scientific research organisation and so on are all functioning today, properly restructured and updated. If anything, more and more of these are set up year after year. It is necessary to emphasise in this context the historically established fact that the motives behind whatever benefits the British brought to India through the laying of national highways or the introduction of railways or the teaching of English or the maintenance of law and order were imperialist and not missionary because the foreign rulers wanted to consolidate their position in the Indian colony. To quote Nehru, 'The introduction of the steam engine and the railway was a big step towards a change of the medieval structure, but it was intended to consolidate their (the British) rule and facilitate the exploitation for their own benefit of the interior of the country'. Nehru, however, paid tribute to the individual Englishmen — educationists orientalists, journalists, missionaries and others — who 'played an important part in bringing western culture to India, and in their attempts to do so often came into conflict with their own Government. That Government feared the effects of the spread of modern education and put many obstacles in its way, and yet it was due to the pioneering efforts of able and earnest Englishmen, who gathered enthusiastic groups of Indian students around them, that English thought and literature and political tradition were introduced to India.'

In Nehru's time, parliamentary democracy, a gift of the British rule, functioned very well, though there was no effective opposition in either

House — Lok Sabha (People's Chamber) and Rajya Sabha (Chamber of Elders). The reason was his own commitment to democratic culture, compounded by the fact that he had as his colleagues stalwarts of equal stature both in the cabinet and the ruling party. The opposition also had matching heavyweights with extraordinary skills and abilities, enriched by their uncompromising integrity. They were all leaders and statesmen with profound respect for democratic graces and decencies and were not afraid of facing criticism, however severe.

Parliamentary democracy has been a great success in England because of the two party system. In India, it can never take root, unless the numerous splinter groups, euphemistically called parties, agree to merge and reappear as a strong alternative to the Congress (I). They should be reorganised on the basis of ideological compulsions and issue-based policies. Today the parties including the Congress (I) are wholly dependent on the charisma of their leaders for survival. There can be no other explanation for the Rajiv Gandhi loyalists' present desperate moves to induct his widow, Sonia, into active politics. Even in the early post-independence years when Nehru dominated the scene, the focus was on personality cult. But his respect for democratic dissent and faith in the wisdom and integrity of his own party colleagues as well as his critics in other parties kept him on the path of sanity. He was aware that there were leaders capable of curbing his authoritarianism and cutting him down to size. There was a severe setback to parliamentary democracy during Indira Gandhi's prime ministership. She even suspended the Constitution and declared Emergency in 1975. She found herself surrounded by cronies, courtiers, crooks and charlatans who went on telling her lies which sounded pleasant to her ears. She thought that she could do anything and get away with it because she fancied that no one in the whole country was more powerful and popular than she. It was said of her that she was the only man in her cabinet. The situation worsened during her son, Rajiv Gandhi's regime. Now courtier culture was at its ugliest, but he seemed to enjoy it all. At last, under the quietly efficient regime of P. V. Narasimha Rao, there are hopeful signs. The prospects of the two party system have brightened, with the possibility of the dissolution of the Janata Dal in the Congress (I) either through defections or merger and the marginalisation of the Leftist parties, following the breakup of the Soviet Union. When this happens, there will be only two parties left: the centrist Congress (I) and the rightist Bharatiya Janata Party. It is imperative that there be only two sharply divided parties with clearly defined and identifiable objectives for the efficient functioning of parliamentary democracy. Once Gladstone said to the Opposition: 'Your business is not to govern the country but it is to call to account those who govern it'. Criticism from the Opposition provides an excellent opportunity for the government to vindicate its stand. For its part, the Opposition should be very dignified and constructive in its criticism without malice or anger. After all, it is the ruling party of the future. Unfortunately, Indian politicians have yet to respond to the spirit and ethos of the two party

system.

Thus the British rule in India was not all exploitation and repression. It had a positive side, too, though patriotic Indians may not recognise it. One of the many things for which the British will be remembered with gratitude is the network of hill stations. The holiday resorts in the hills, established by the British in India, are among the best in the world. Of course, the British had selfish motives in organising these magnificent mountain retreats to which they used to escape from the heat and dust of the plains. They sometimes practised a sort of subtle apartheid by closing certain roads, residential areas and clubs to admission by Indians. It is strange that the Indian Tourism Development Corporation does not pay attention to these hill stations in their promotional campaigns. These exquisite holiday resorts set in the exotic Himalayan and other ranges are prime tourist attractions. The reason for their official neglect possibly is that these mountain retreats, being a legacy of colonial rule, will remind the foreign visitor of the British who discovered and developed them. I have in mind Kodaikanal (about 7,000 feet above sea level) which is more English than any other hill station in India. It is claimed to be the second finest hill station in the world, the first being somewhere in California. Kodaikanal has serenity and subtle charm. At Kodai all the essential amenities of modern living are abundantly available. But the vulgar and extravagant exhibitionism of the *nouveau riche* is refreshingly absent. That is why one doesn't see the familiar faces one has run away from. This quiet little town in the Palani hills has all the primness, prettiness and poetry of the English countryside. True, it doesn't have the imposing majesty of the Himalayan vistas. But it has the lyrical calm and cosiness of one's own home away from home. Kodai is a village among cities and city among villages. The air is cool and crisp. Kodai has none of Ooty's cheeky chilliness. There is gentle sunshine throughout the year. The rainfall is moderate and there is no humidity at all. The attractions of Kodai, however, are not merely meteorological. These are basically spiritual. What one seeks and finds here is, not physical pleasure, but inner harmony unobtainable in other hill stations which are the haunts of the exhibitionist affluent with plenty of unaccounted money.

The roads, another bequest from the British, are in very bad shape. It is one thing to inherit something from a rich uncle and quite another to preserve it in good condition. The future quality of Indian roadways depends on: (i) the courtesy and discipline of drivers of heavy vehicles, (ii) the vigilance of the maintenance and inspecting staff, (iii) the pace at which road research proceeds, (iv) the quality of materials that are used in the repair of the old roads and in the laying of new ones, (v) the speed, efficiency and integrity with which repairs are carried out and (vi) the priority the state and the central governments give to road development in budget allocations. Much depends on the quality of men entrusted with the important task of keeping the arteries of the nation in a healthy condition.

Indian railways also tell the same sad tale. Overcrowding, insanitation,

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corruption, labour indiscipline, unpunctuality, appalling catering arrangements, insensitivity to the legitimate grievances of the travelling public: these are some of the criticisms levelled against the Indian railways which, being the most popular mode of travel, deserve to be managed better so that the highest standards of cleanliness, comfort, cuisine, punctuality, efficiency, honesty and public accountability are maintained. Press of numbers, the sheer size of the country, the teething troubles of a nascent nation, the shortage of rolling stock and the lack of co-operation from the travelling public are the usual alibis the Indian bureaucracy finds, whenever it messes up things — apart from the familiar refrain that the British caused irreparable damage to India in all areas.

The Indian armed forces — particularly the army — rated highly among the toughest fighting professional outfits in the world, represent the British tradition at its best. Discipline, determination, devotion to duty, decorum and daring: these are the qualities that distinguish the Indian officer and the soldier, as demonstrated during World Wars I and II. Fortunately the canker of politics has not penetrated this well-protected area so far. But you never know.

Among the living relics of the Indo-British encounter, Nirad C. Chaudhuri, from Bengal, who lives at Oxford, is outstanding. This brilliant and prolific writer is 90 plus and still keeps working to a tight schedule. Recently, he brought out the massive 1,000 page sequel to his widely acclaimed *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian.* Chaudhuri is known for his tidiness, thoroughness, toughness and truthfulness. He is a bitter man, because he feels that he has done so much for his country and got so little in return. While his ecstasies are English, his agonies are Indian. The flowers in his literary garden are English, but the soil is Indian. His stately and sensuous prose reflects the depth and sharpness of his British responses to the Indian challenges.

There are many specimens of British architecture, still in good condition, in different parts of the country. Bombay's Victoria Terminus and Calcutta's Victoria Memorial are among the better preserved ones. These monuments, representing a nice blend of Indo-European styles, are loved by local people. The 69-year-old Victoria Memorial, on a 64 acre stretch, dotted with verdant lawns, ponds, flowerbeds and shrubbery, represents Lord Curzon's magnificent tribute in marble to his Queen. Popularly known locally as Mullick Palace, the fine building was designed by Sir William Emerson, president of the British Institute of Architects. It contains a number of rare paintings, sculptures, maps, manuscripts, weapons, textiles, coins and stamps. The affection and care with which the Indians preserve the British monuments can be judged by the expensively elaborate methods of renovation that the Calcutta authorities, in active collaboration with the London-based Calcutta Tercentenary Trust, have been funding. The Trust is expected to raise one million pounds for the purpose. Air-conditioning of galleries, improving storage facilities, a special section on Calcutta with reconstruction of the life and spirit of the city and *sont et lumiere* are some of the important features of the present restoration

and renovation programme. Among the rare manuscripts on display at the Memorial is the treaty signed by Sir Robert Clive and Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula. Operation Restoration is a joint Indo-British project with Alan Tritton of Barclay's Bank as Chairman of the Committee set up for the purpose. The sources from which there has been a steady flow of funds are: (i) Bengal Chamber of Commerce, (ii) the Tata Industries, (iii) Macneil and Magor and (iv) that superstar of the Indian cinema, Amitabh Bachhan.

The State and Central governments, whatever be the parties in power, are determined to erase the British rule from history by simply renaming streets, towns and roads. How naive! In spite of the ever increasing number of renamed streets and roads, the common people still identify the local areas only by the original British names. Thus George Town is still George Town in Madras, Connaught Circus is still Connaught Circus in New Delhi, Dalhousie Square is still Dalhousie Square in Calcutta and Ballard Estate is still Ballard Estate in Bombay. Similarly the numerous landmarks in smaller towns in different parts of the country are familiar to the local residents only by the original British and not by the new Indian names.

Many individual Englishmen and women loved India and lived there, trying to promote Indo-British friendship. The missionary zeal and the humanitarian spirit behind their activities softened the imperialist blows. At the London end also a number of English men and women worked hard for the promotion of goodwill and understanding between the two countries. One recalls with gratitude the services of sincere people committed to the cause of Indian freedom, such as: Hume, Wedderburn, Horace Alexander, Fenner Brockway, H. N. Brailsford, Harold J. Laskie, Carl Heath, Muriel Lester and Agatha Harrison.

After all, it was an Englishman, Allan Octavian Hume, who founded the Indian Congress in 1885 — the organisation which terminated the British rule in 1947.

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[A. S. Raman is a former editor of *The Illustrated Weekly* of India, Bombay.]

# SAILING THROUGH BALTIC HISTORY

## by S. F. Bailey

IN 1990, the Seventh International Congress of Maritime Museums was held primarily on board an elderly cruise ship, the *Kristina Regina*, which also served as our hotel; but wherever possible the formal sessions were held on shore in Stockholm. Every day we had to walk past and round the huge black hulk of the *Vasa*, the central piece of the new museum.

The *Vasa* is roughly the Swedish equivalent of the English *Mary Rose*, but larger. She was the latest of the Swedish navy's warships when she capsized and sank on 10 August 1628 on her maiden voyage, but with the loss of only about 50 lives. The reason for the disaster seems clear; she was far too top-heavy, and unstable in even a relatively light wind. What is more the experts and technicians at the time knew she was, because while she was still moored at the quay she was tested by having thirty men run from side to side across the deck. After three runs they had to stop, or she would have capsized right there at her moorings. Unfortunately, the king, Gustavus II Adolphus, wanted his new ship at sea, and, moreover, had approved her design. In these circumstances no one was going to say too much about instability. It was a situation not unlike the airship R101 disaster in 1930, when the experts thought she ought not to start her maiden flight but government ministers insisted she should. Unlike the R101, however, where the principal minister concerned backed his bad judgement by boarding the airship and dying with her, the Swedish king was well away in Prussia at the time his ship sank.

An unexpected bonus of the Stockholm part of the programme was that on the Sunday, when registration of delegates began, we were joined by the kotch *Pomor*. A kotch is a two-masted, gaff-rigged and tiller-steered boat about 36 feet long, with three pairs of oars for use when the sails are out of action; and Pomors were the inhabitants of the Russian far north who hunted, fished, and traded in the Arctic. This type of boat went out of use about two hundred years ago but was revived in 1987 by the Polar Odyssey Club of Petrozavodsk on Lake Onega to the south-west of Archangel. Eight or nine engaging young maniacs from the club had agreed to sail and row the Pomor on a three-month expedition from Kizhi Island on Lake Onega (which some atlases name Lake Onezhskoye) far to the north of Leningrad, through inland waters to the White Sea still further north, to Archangel, then onwards beyond the Arctic Circle round the top of Finland and Norway, down along the western coast of Norway, through the Skagerrak and Kattegat, calling at Copenhagen, up the Baltic to Stockholm, then Helsinki, Tallinn and Leningrad (as it was then called), then by inland waters again back to base on Lake Onega. They were scheduled to reach Stockholm on the Sunday, and did just that, rowing through the harbour to a mooring at the end of the quay where the *Kristina* lay. Once they settled in there was no mistaking their presence. As soon

as the gaff booms had been lowered and the sails furled, eight bells of varying sizes were hung from the main mast boom; lines were tied to each of the bell clappers and taken to a point a foot or so aft and starboard of the main mast, five of them apparently bunched together and three tied off separately slightly to port. One man, with five of the lines in his right hand and using his left hand to pluck negligently at whichever he wanted of the other three, then rang a spirited carillon. There was presumably a system behind this, but as far as we could tell it seemed to happen whenever the mood took them, which was fairly frequently. It really was a sort of carillon, too, and not just a noisy jangle.

Our last memory of Stockholm came a week later, when we found ourselves with a day spare in the city on our way back to England from Helsinki. We took a trip, by local train and then bus, to Drottningholm, which is an old royal estate a few miles out of Stockholm consisting of several buildings and some fine gardens, the focal point of it all being an eighteenth century theatre, the Drottningholm Slottsteater. The estate, which is described as a miniature Swedish Versailles, goes back to the sixteenth century but the present theatre had its inaugural performance in 1766. The architect and builder was Carl Frederick Adelcrantz, and for the record it should be noted that he was never paid for his work but in lieu of sordid money was allowed to live in. In fact, he designed and built a special room for himself and another for his servant. Unfortunately the thin walls and single glazing made it unusable in the winter, so the free quarters were not so much of a bargain.

The whole estate is delightful and the buildings elegant, but much of the interest of the place lies in the fact that the theatre, a splendid bit of eighteenth century fakery, should have survived at all. Gustaff III, who commissioned it, was assassinated in 1792 (thereby providing the plot for Verdi's *Masked Ball*), and the whole place was closed. It was not properly opened again until 1921, when Agne Beijer, a theatre historian, got permission to enter the theatre in search of a painting and discovered it, and its sets, costumes, stage machinery, furniture, even the hand-painted wallpaper, were all there, untouched and more or less intact. It was cleaned up, electricity installed, and re-inaugurated within a year. It is small by modern standards, seating at most 454 people on 32 rows of benches, and the auditorium is seen at its best in low lighting, roughly the equivalent of candlelight. This is partly because it has as far as possible been preserved as it was found, and is consequently a bit tatty; but mainly because so much of the decoration is a mixture of trompe l'oeil and papier-mache, and anything approaching daylight destroys the effect. It is nevertheless used regularly for summer festivals. The original wallpaper, which merely hangs against the walls and can be taken down and stored each winter for re-use the following year, is still in use. And the original stage machinery is still used, too, including the old thunder machine up on the grid above the stage. It makes an excellent noise.

At the end of our first four days in Stockholm the *Kristina* cast off and we headed for Mariehamn in the Aland Islands (pronounced 'Orland').

Mariehamn is not merely the capital city of Aland but the only city, if a village of about 8,000 people can be called a city. In almost everything other than numbers it behaves like a city and even manages to look like one; and it can properly be thought of as a capital because the Aland Islands, with a total population of about 25,000, have since 1921 been by international treaty an autonomous province of Finland. They have their own Parliament in charge of education, health, police and local administration, and their official language is Swedish, not Finnish. It is an example which a lot of other places might consider following.

Apart from its charm as a city, Mariehamn had for us two other attractions. It has a tiny but very good maritime museum which welcomed us with unconstrained pleasure despite the fact that over 200 people crowded into the place; and it has the *Pommern*, the oldest four-masted steel barque still working. She was built in 1903 at Greenock for a German company, was ceded to the Greeks after 1918, and bought by Sweden's Gustaf Erikson in 1923. He gave her to the city of Mariehamn in 1952 for preservation as a museum ship, and she's still there, in good working order.

The next stop was Kotka, to the north of Helsinki but still in Finland, which we reached at two o'clock the following afternoon. Kotka is a deep-water port and relatively important in the Baltic; but its most notable feature to a new arrival is that it has a wood-pulp plant which diffuses its stink over the whole town. For most of the summer of 1990 the town was celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of the second battle of Ruotsinsalmi, a naval battle between Russia and Sweden of which few of us had heard. Ruotsinsalmi seems to be a district of Kotka. The first battle, of 1789, was won by Russia but the second, in 1790, by Sweden. Even the brochure produced by the Kotka tourist office admitted however that the war, of which the two battles formed a part, was inconclusive. Still, it was fought over what is now Finnish territory, it was their big occasion, and they made the most of it. We were toured in coaches round a bit of the town and then delivered to a new library and museum. Here we were greeted first by a small band of teenagers playing stirring and approximately popular music, western-style; and second by the Mayor of Kotka, who ushered us into a large lecture theatre and told us that the ICMM was important, that Kotka was important, and that the battle of Ruotsinsalmi was important, tactfully omitting to say which one. He then handed us over to a determined looking woman who would, he said, give us the full story. And she did, or she tried to. She read, not very clearly, from a prepared academic text starting from somewhere deep in the ancient Goths and working stolidly forward through the centuries, reaching (as far as I could tell) the lead-in to the two battles of Ruotsinsalmi only after an hour. Even the Finns in our party, and there were about a dozen of them, were finding this heavy going, and one of them twice passed a note to the lectern asking for the lecture to be brought to an end because we were running out of time. She trod firmly on, and we would be there yet if after one particularly convoluted sentence she had not had to pause to draw breath. A genius in the front row instantly began to applaud heavily,

the rest of us joined in, she blushed and gave a little bow, and the ordeal was over. We fled for the *Kristina* to wash and change for the formal reception and dinner at the Kotka Club, hosted by the Mayor who had got us into this fix in the first place.

By ten o'clock that night we were casting off for our next stop. This had been billed in the ICMM timetable as a 'Secret Tour', and we were told what it was only the previous day. Somehow or other the congress organisers, probably helped by the presence of two delegates from the USSR in the Congress, had been able to agree with whatever USSR authorities were concerned that we should pay a short visit to the USSR naval base at Kronstadt. As far as we could find out this had never been done for an international party of any size since the base had been established in 1704, and we were told that not many people of any sort were allowed in as tourists anyway. As befitted such an occasion we were greeted by the garrison cadet band playing martial music, but they had to play for longer than expected, because there was difficulty in finding a gangplank suitable for the *Kristina*. They kept at it until we could totter ashore and stand around in admiring groups. We were then shown the town, but not much else. It is an outstandingly dull town, with streets laid out on a grid and old, not very well maintained houses. And a park, with heroic statues, about which we were lectured by yet another didactic guide. It also had moored at the various quays a large number of what appeared to be fairly old frigates, although larger ships may have been out of sight. However, we gathered that Kronstadt is no longer the major naval base it used to be. Kronstadt is actually an island quite close to St. Petersburg, and ships going to the city have to go up a special channel which passes very close indeed to the base. One came through while we were there and it looked for a while as though it was actually coming into the base. The problem is that the approaches are difficult and depend on dredged channels, and the final approach works on a one-way system, with ships going in for part of the day and going out for the other part.

When we did go ashore at Kronstadt we ran into the same immigration troubles that we met in the other USSR ports. Until we reached Soviet territory immigration controls were barely noticeable, and amiable characters, if there was anybody at all present, simply waved us through. They appeared to wave everyone through, although there were no doubt checks being made. In theory Kronstadt was our entry point to the USSR, but in practice we had to go through the same drill at each of the subsequent ports. A couple of uniformed men on duty at or near the ship demanded our passports and gave us a brown substitute which was some form of temporary visa. This got us off the ship, and when we wanted to get back on again we had to produce it to the same two men, who exchanged it for our passports, which we then had to show to the two further men guarding the gangplank itself. It was a totally pointless routine, because there was no time to make any checks and even if there had been it was difficult to see what sort of check would be any use. After we left Tallinn it was a relief to land at Helsinki and simply walk off the

dock.

After a bare three hours at Kronstadt we left for Leningrad, arriving soon after lunch. Leningrad was fairly routine tourist stuff after the excitement of being allowed in Kronstadt—the cruiser *Aurora*, the *Hermitage*, the Central Naval Museum, a coach tour of the city. We did have an evening reception and general party at the main Seamen's Club. This was housed in what must have been either a small palace or a large town house, with marble staircase and all the appropriate twiddley bits. The largest room, on the first floor, had the buffet plus Western-style music and in a slightly smaller room on the same floor there was folk music and shouting and stamping provided by four young women and two men with accordians, all of them in what were presumably folk costumes. The place was big enough for the two groups not really to interfere with each other. We left early in the evening of the second day, heading for Tallinn, which we reached early the following morning.

Tallinn, apart from the immigration controls, was more lively and a lot more pleasant to look at than Leningrad. We were there for a full day, all taken up with sightseeing, and after dinner on board the *Kristina* had a reception in the Estonian Maritime Museum. The situation called for a lot of tact and care. The problem was that the Estonians, what with one thing and another, had very little in the way of spare food and drinks for strangers, despite their obvious desire to be hospitable. So we had our dinner first and then went along to the reception, almost everybody carrying as unobtrusively as possible plastic bags with gifts culled from the duty-free shop on the ship—chocolates, biscuits, bottles of drink, whatever anyone thought would be a good idea. These were sneaked in and then left in a heap on a table near the entrance. By the time we were all in it made quite a pile.

The Estonian Maritime Museum is a good one, although not very big, housed in an old gun tower. It is a very large, squat gun tower, most ungallantly named Fat Margaret. We were told there is another tower in the city called Tall Herman but we didn't see that, all we saw was Fat Margaret. It had been organised for a museum with a spiral staircase in the middle, and the exhibits arranged on the floors around the central staircase. In some cases they were arranged right in the walls, which were at least a metre or more thick. It was a good arrangement and made for easy viewing.

It was while we were in Tallinn that my wife and I had one of our more memorable encounters with officialdom. We wanted to buy a few postcards and stamps, but had no roubles. Both could be obtained, we were told, at the Hotel Viru, in the main square. We went there, found that it was so, chose some cards and found out what stamps were needed, and then went round behind the postcard and newspaper stall to the official currency exchange counter. The rate we were offered was 10.77 roubles to a pound sterling, so we wanted to exchange the minimum. Could she, we asked the woman in charge, exchange as little as £5? Yes, of course she could. We produced our five pound note and handed it over. She studied it with the

ususal Intourist suspicion, produced a printed list with a great deal of small type, and examined that with even more care. She frowned and looked unhappy. She studied both sides of the note again, checked the printed list again. In the end she looked up, definitely very, very unhappy. 'Vhere', she demanded, stabbing her finger at the picture of George Stephenson on the reverse of the note, 'Vhere is Vellington? Zhere is no Vellington.' It was, of course, one of the new notes and we explained this to her. This made her still more unhappy. 'Vellington,' she kept repeating, 'Vellington, it must be Vellington.' None of us could know that a year later, the Soviet system would have vanished quicker than the Duke of Wellington from the five pound note. We had, indeed sailed through much Baltic history.

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[S. F. Bailey retired from Hong Kong in 1983 after 25 years overseas and began doing voluntary work with the Cutty Sark/Maritime Trust. He published *The Crews of the Cutty Sark* in 1989. His latest book, *Cutty Sark Figureheads: the Long John Silver Collection*, will appear at Easter 1992.]

The February number of *Contemporary Review* includes: *The Promise of Nuclear Fusion* by Peter Hodgson and *Fiction Becomes Fact: Maxwell and Melmotte* by Richard Mullen.

# FIGHTING FOR THE MIDDLE GROUND

## by Paul B. Rose

IN August 1988 I wrote in *Contemporary Review* that 'If the time comes as it may well do when Mrs. Thatcher's personal popularity becomes an embarrassment to the Conservative Party, there are waiting in the wings half a dozen mainstream Tories, although I am interested in what the astrologers may say of Michael Heseltine'. Insofar as Michael Heseltine's vote dislodged Margaret Thatcher after a decade in which the ideological right ruled, the Heseltine star was only momentarily in the ascendant. In the event it was only partly the ideology of Thatcherism that brought about its inevitable downfall. It was the style of Mrs. Thatcher herself that led to the enactment of a political drama analogous to the fall of Caesar but without the bloodletting. On the surface the emergence of John Major as Mrs. Thatcher's political successor initially gave rise to a widespread view that we were about to witness 'son of Thatcher'. In fact it is not Major's difference in style which transformed British politics in 1991. It is not even his difference in emphasis and tone. Clearly, he is conciliatory where his predecessor was confrontational. His very greyness is a relief after the manic energy generated by a leader for whom power appeared to generate a permanent high.

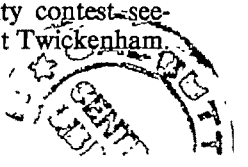
In that same article I wrote that 'The awful truth for the left is that the main beneficiaries of the demise of Thatcherism will more likely than not be the Conservative Party reverting to traditional one nation Toryism'. Indeed, in its attitudes to everything from Child Benefit to playing a positive role in Europe, there has been a reversion to the sort of politics one might have expected after reading Chris Patten's *Case for Conservatism* published prior to the last election. On the face of it there are still policies being pursued which are left over business from the Thatcher years. This is perhaps the main embarrassment that Mr. Major has to face in appearing to represent continuity while at the same time abandoning ideological baggage left behind by the Iron Lady following her departure from No. 10.

By the same token Mr. Kinnock has all but completed the transformation of the Labour Party into an alternative Conservative option, purportedly more efficient in pursuit of many of the same goals. The abandonment of embarrassing policies on nuclear weapons, public ownership and a role reversal on Europe has at one and the same time made the Labour Party more credible as a Party of government but less credible in terms of a Party of principle. That mantle has been donned perhaps by the Liberal Democrats who have been unswerving in their attitudes to Europe, to electoral and constitutional reform as well as devolution. On a political plane Paddy Ashdown is leading the most radical of the three parties in terms of social institutional change. He gives nothing away to the Labour Party in terms of a caring society placing education and the Health Service not only above tax reduction but in stating his willingness to increase income tax if necessary. The other side of the coin is a less

interventionist economic policy including the privatisation of British Rail which is well to the right in the traditional political spectrum.

In the honeymoon period following the departure of Mrs. Thatcher, opinion polls showed a remarkable surge in Conservative support. Central to this was the demise of the deeply unpopular Poll Tax which was Mrs. Thatcher's albatross. In dithering about the alternative, Labour was able to capitalise on the spectre of son of Poll Tax but in retrospect this overwhelmingly contentious issue is now hardly a matter upon which political commentators have a word to say. All Party leaders had 'A good war' in the Gulf but certainly Mr. Ashdown benefited most from his balanced and authoritative appearances on the media which gave him an exposure to the public gaze that he had not previously enjoyed. Messrs. Major, Hurd and King equally came out as reliable figures at a time of crisis as indeed did Mr. Kinnock in spite of some of the dissenting voices behind him. The smart weapons were still hitting their targets and prisoners were still being counted as the opposition began its new onslaught. After an agonising delay Mr. Major certainly benefited by his initiative over the plight of the Kurds. Dissident Tories rocked the boat in their desire to cling to the principle if not the practice, of Poll Tax, just as they have done more recently with regard to the abandonment of the strident anti-Europeanism of Mrs. Thatcher. The resignation of Nicholas Ridley, the departure of Mr. Tebbit and Mr. Parkinson made way for new faces, some of which are not yet familiar to the public. The faces of Toryism may be more acceptable but they are certainly less visible. Conservatives must be concerned when a political commentator inadvertently referred to Mr. Howard as 'The Minister of Unemployment' and Mr. Waldegrave, in spite of a successful speech to the Party faithful at Blackpool, is still continuing to allow hospitals to adopt Trust status and opt out of Local Health Authority control. Although it is manifestly untrue, Messrs. Cook and Kinnock have certainly been able to sow doubts in the minds of the public as to the commitment of the Conservative Party to the National Health Service. That they have a legitimate criticism of the tendency to use the yardstick of profitability and book-keeping in an area where the proper measure is care, service and cure would be the more legitimate criticism of current policies. These are unacceptable even to many traditionally Conservative members of the medical profession. In this sense, as in others, Mr. Major is left the legacy which he inherited.

The curious situation in British politics today is that over the last decade one witnessed the most ideological government at least since the reforming administration committed to the Morrisonian concept of nationalisation that ran out of steam in 1951. 1991 has seen a return to pragmatism on the part of the two largest Parties. As the year wore on and the polls became more volatile, the war of words was stepped up to a veritable crescendo in the anticipation of a possible Autumn election. In the event the polls themselves ruled out that possibility as each succeeding pollster notched up another point in the popularity contest-seesawing like the two packs in the opening World Cup match at Twickenham.



All this gave pundits and psephologists a field day with the publication of each new poll.

No-where is the change in British politics more apparent than in the stage management of the annual conferences of the various Parties. The Greens reflected the shambles that face what ought properly to be a pressure group given delusions as a result of remarkable returns in the European elections. Gone are the endearing political eccentricities of the old Liberal Party. Every commentator described how beards and sandals were out and grey or dark suits in. However, it is not the mode of dress but the creation of a coherent set of policies and a credible leadership which characterised the Liberal Conference. It is perhaps a pity that the Social Democratic input is not what it might have been as a result of the kamikaze activities of a certain doctor whose name is now consigned to history. Charismatic figures waiting in the wings have characterised English politics only insofar as they have remained in the wings. Colombé Les Deux Eglises is a long way from the various residences of Oswald Moseley, Enoch Powell and Dr. Owen. At least we had the last flourish with the almost contemporaneous publishing of Lord Jenkins' memoirs coinciding with his own although I for one did not have the courage to read 800 pages of what appears to have sounded like a cross between Barbara Cartland and Jeffrey Archer. My own personal involvement in those particular matters corroborate all that I read in Lord Jenkins' contribution on that particular episode of the British Party politics. Nonetheless, the Liberal Democrats while having remarkable successes both at local and bi-election level, have yet to overcome the obstacle course erected by the first past the post system. Every sign is that they may gain a few more gold medals in the election Olympics but are not yet poised to replace Labour as the major alternative political Party to the Conservatives. That they have done so over large swathes of Southern England, the Celtic fringes and other pockets give them a vested interest in Labour not obtaining an overall majority at the next election.

Indeed, in this context when one considers that there are in the House of Commons Ulster Unionists, Democratic Unionists, the SDLP, Scots and Welsh Nationalists, the likelihood of one single Party obtaining an overall majority is probably less than it has been at any time in post-war history. Certainly Mr. Kinnock is not now bowing in the direction of a Lib-Lab pact and Mr. Hattersley even less so. There are however some in his Party like Robin Cook and perhaps many more than one might at first expect who are beginning to see the possible advantages of a reform in the electoral system. Indeed, the Labour Party stole some of the Liberal's clothes in moving hesitatingly in that direction with regard to the reform of the House of Lords, European elections and even setting up some sort of commission to look into the possibilities that others such as Charter 88 have been fighting for some years. Labour's economic team does look impressive, if not formidable and their heavyweights led by John Smith have a preponderence of members from North of the border. The new wave of Labour MPs which replaced the traditional local councillors

put out to graze mirror the change in the Labour Party south of the border which occurred between 1964 and 1966. Unhappily with regard to the latter, many of the most talented were lost in the haemorrhage to the SDP. John Prescott may lack the charm of Edward G. Robinson but there is much strength in Labour's criticism of the government's transport policy and its failure to invest for the future in a modern rail system. That matter came out embarrassingly for the Conservatives in the clearly politically expedient — albeit in my view correct — decision with regard to the routing of the Channel Tunnel link.

It is unusual for Tory Party gatherings to allow themselves to be embarrassed in the midst of a conference. The previous two conferences had clearly given a boost to their Parties and their leaders. Mr. Kinnock was the object of what seemed to be an almost orchestrated down-grading of him by the press following a public opinion poll which reflected his relative unpopularity in relation to his own Party. He is not a charismatic figure and has always been a lightweight. He had however achieved remarkable changes in the Labour Party and managed to abandon some of his own ideological preferences on the way. He has put together an alternative team which, given the less experienced Conservative middle-ranking ministers, has evened up the contest. However, British political history shows that issues rather than personalities have in the last analysis won elections and in the Health Service stakes, unemployment and the recession the Labour Party has some built-in advantages unless the Chancellor is seen to turn things round before time runs out for the government. Clearly, Mr. Kinnock made a grave mistake in being out of the country when cataclysmic events were occurring in the Soviet Union and others were able to make the running in comment. Every parliamentary recess permits a government to have a much larger profile and to be seen to be carrying on government while an Opposition fades away. Labour's Conference which increasingly mirrors the Conservative jamboree, apart from a slight hiccup over Militant, was only controversial as between those who approved and did not approve of the rendering of various emotive anthems. There are some who may have had tears of joy or nostalgia in their eyes and others who regarded this as pure music hall. I found myself to be curiously detached. At least it was different.

The joyful choruses of the Labour Party Conference were followed by blistering Tory attacks but there was less than adequate substance in the policies presented at the Conservative Conference. For many the spectacle of Mrs. Thatcher creating pandemonium by her very appearance must have been unnerving. Nevertheless Mr. Major carried it all off remarkably well and his confidence with a slight streak of aggression has created a more effective image than the initially grey, diffident if likeable personality who first stepped out of Downing Street after Mrs. Thatcher's defeat. If she was the ghost at the supper, the ghost has probably now been busted by the Party managers. There seems to be a remarkable inconsistency between the impressive speech of Mr. Major with regard to a classless Britain and the decision to assist those most wealthy amongst us in

stacking the odds against the least privileged in society by reducing Inheritance Tax. Similarly, Mr. Lamont's laudable aim to reduce Income Tax even further does little to allay the nation's fears with regard to public services. There is however the peace dividend which allows a Conservative government for the first time to be accused of damaging our defence capacity but which permits greater public spending upon those services which are most needed in order to prevent the quality of life in Britain from deteriorating even further.

Party loyalties which were once inbred have steadily declined with the socio-economic and cultural changes that have occurred since 1945. The art of political communication and the razzamatazz of British politics may fall well short of those in the United States but the Conservative Conference ended with a faint flavour of a Republican Party Convention.

At a time when events in the world outside seem to loom ever larger and our own political differences seem to have shrunk in the search for the middle ground, it is difficult to work up enormous enthusiasm in the run up to the election. At least the Labour Party now supports fixed term parliaments and Mr. Major is gambling upon successes both at home and abroad by Mr. Lamont and Mr. Hurd in particular. His conference was an exercise in damage limitation but the post-conference polls seem to indicate that it was a failure in putting paid to public fears over those areas where the government is most vulnerable. The gnome like figure of Mr. Robin Cook must be haunting the halls of Conservative Central Office. The monthly unemployment figures have a greater impact than those showing the downward turn in inflation. By the 20th of October the *Observer* was able to display the headline 'Labour surges 7 points ahead'. It is in this volatile context that the last stages of the domestic political drama are played out. Already the Government's changes on tax concessions for private healthcare for the elderly and the appointment of Mr. Heseltine to play a more interventionist role are further signs of movement in response to Labour's advantage with health and unemployment, the central preoccupations of a worried electorate. In spite of the strident voices, the fact is that the Parties are closer than at any time since the days of what was called Butskellism.

Against that background it would be no surprise to me if large segments of the electorate are genuinely floating rather than swimming strongly in any particular direction. I confess to being more concerned about the devastation around Dubrovnik, the rise of xenophobia in Europe and not least in Germany itself, the failure of Israel and the Arabs to show any sign of breaking out of the legacy of past conflict. By the same token the grinding poverty which is the norm for most of our fellow human beings and our continued lip service rather than concerted action in preserving our planet are all matters which dwarf the party political conflict in what after all is a tiny area half the size of California containing 1% of the world's population. Perhaps the reason I display a Union Jack on my car and become increasingly strident in my support for our sporting achievements is an emotional compensation for the intellectual realisation

that it matters not a great deal whether Mr. Major or Mr. Kinnock wins the middle ground in the Midlands or succeeds in suburbia. In a year which saw the Russian Empire crumble and Kuwait turned into a torch of burning oil, our parochial concerns may be placed in perspective.

I therefore ought to be thankful for small mercies in that those who termed me a 'traitor' when 69 of us entered the lobby two decades ago to support our entry into the EEC are now all good Europeans. I should be pleased to see John Major writing off the debts of impoverished third world members of the Commonwealth while upholding the principle of human rights. I would be even happier if in 1992 a certain Mr. Ashdown is supported by enough voters to ensure that vision rather than expediency becomes the watchword for all Parties in this small but still significant state that in the face of much of the evidence continues to call itself the United Kingdom.

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[Paul B. Rose is HM Coroner for the Southern District of Greater London. He was Labour MP for Manchester Blackley (1964-79) and a founder member of the SDP before deciding to leave parliamentary politics.]

## POEM

### PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Lurking low in the village pool
the hungry crocodile hid the fool.

Poor fool, his life was only a trifle
and no-one bothered to lift a rifle—

till, to everyone's public grief,
the crocodile chose the local chief.

Thomas Land

# THE SOUNDS OF SUFFOLK

## by Geoffrey Heptonstall

THE sea coast of Suffolk inspired Dickens to write *David Copperfield* and Crabbe to write *The Borough*, two works which testify to the harshness of the sea, especially in winter but at any season. It is tempting to ascribe a personality to the sea with its violent moods, not readily forgiving, yet possessing a peace and beauty like no other on earth. Of course, these things are there by the impersonal force of nature. There is no guiding consciousness, although we feel there must be to raise its magnificence or still its power into a serenity.

Given the character of the sea, its attraction for artists is obvious. I have never searched out the reason why Benjamin Britten was drawn specifically to Aldeburgh. I think it was simply that he paid a visit and found it suited his needs. The inspiration of Crabbe confirmed the decision. Elsewhere in Britten the sea settings — *Billy Budd, Death in Venice* and others — suggest the depth of Britten's relationship with Aldeburgh. It was a resource as well as a residence.

So strong is the connection between the man and the place we see Aldeburgh filtered through Britten's creative vision. Anyone aware of his music cannot avoid its resonances on that part of the shore. Britten changed Aldeburgh simply — if it has anything to do with simplicity — by being there.

The Aldeburgh Festival is as close as we can find to the thread which might lead us down the shadowed lanes of an imagined landscape, the Aldeburgh behind the music. Britten started the Festival partly as a showcase for his work created according to his own setting. But it was more than that. With the Festival Britten could observe, experience and share the living relationship with his chosen ground.

The Maltings at Snape became the physical manifestation of a spirit. It rises out of the estuary marsh like an Atlantis rediscovered. Having come to know the area well in all seasons, I think I can say that the Maltings and the Festival really do touch the lives of everyone who wants to be touched. There is no sense I can find of an imposition by and for metropolitans at play. Britten remains a source of local pride. That special sense of locality can never be fashioned out of a formula. It is Aldeburgh's luck — or grace. And it may be that Aldeburgh sought out Britten quite as much as he sought it.

There have been a number of significant cultural moments at the Festival quite apart from Britten and music. It was here that E. M. Forster made public his unfinished novel *Arctic Summer*. Kenneth Clark, who was brought up on the south side of the Alde, often lectured at the Festival. He spent a lot of time in addition, usually at the Wentworth Hotel, writing.

Clark famously said that he could not define civilisation, but he could identify it. The tranquillity of somewhere like Aldeburgh carries a sense of a civilised identity because something wilder is close, perpetually en-

croaching on territory claimed for human culture.

I dreamed once of a village by the sea whose streets were flooded at each high tide. I don't know of any such place anywhere, but perhaps one exists. The sea invites that kind of strange idea. I read of a terrible storm some time last century when a lifeboat successfully rescued the crew of a stricken ship. The idea of that determined enterprise, pervaded by such danger, seems as compelling as it is not quite imaginable. Of course the courage leaves us abashed. But there is more than that. I am thinking of the vastness of the sea. Look out to sea at any time and try projecting beyond that limitless expanse. Then picture the world within. Add night and storm.

The texture of Britten's music, whatever the subject, seems to have been made against a seascape. We think of modernism as a product of the machine age — the dissonance resembling the concatenation of mechanised precisions, and the deracination of values by the techniques of near-total destruction. These things are true, but the great modernists have other resources at their command, no less consonant to our experience.

Britten's music is far from being an explosion in a sound-effects studio. He is too aware of tradition for that. He knew of the stock of values and experiences he needed to inherit. But there is a radical sense of reaching towards unknown harmonies. This necessary task is the modern movement, that forum where genius and charlatan meet. It will take time to know for certain which is which. We must be patient.

In the mean time we can use our inner convictions to recognise a genuine art. If Britten's final significance remains for the future — well, we are becoming that future. At the very least we can say — and must say — that there are possible glimpses of another music. He has sighted land across the ocean.

It is easy to grow tired of the bickering between progress and continuity, whether in art or more generally. These should never have become polar opposites, still less exactly-defined battle lines. How can we not draw upon both in measures to suit whatever is the immediate need? To deny wholly the past is the innumerate vacuity of the Year One. We are too late for that. Equally, we cannot deny with any seriousness the here and now. If we associate the sea with eternity we must remember also how it changes.

The last act by Peter Fuller was the exhibition which became his memorial following his untimely death weeks before the 1990 Festival. I never met him, but I could pay homage to someone who cared about art rather than theory, someone for whom art was not a metaphor for frustrated political emotions.

I feel much less ambivalent about modernism in design than in music. I revel in those pyrotechnic displays which are abstract art. Fuller's exhibition, on the literal shoreline itself, was a celebration of art for the sake of the secrets it reveals and the demands they make. 'Landscape Visions' was about the higher sense which comes from our engagement with something important outside of ourselves.

He predicted that the closing years of the century would see a revival in landscape art. He was not thinking of pretty images from topography. Rather, he spoke of imaginative and visionary perceptions. He saw landscape interpreted by a radical eye.

The pictures he favoured to illustrate this feeling seem, for the most part, to be abstract. In reality they have an enclosed relation to the natural world. This is the same ground as, say, Miro, and further back to Turner. Representation of the known becomes a re-creation through fresh discoveries of form and meaning.

Fuller found particular value in the Suffolk landscape, drawing partly on his own background, but also from a tradition which includes major work by Wilson Steer and then Constable and Gainsborough. 'The Haywain' is the most known picture in English art. Our idea of the English countryside is Suffolk, rather as our image of an industrial town is from Lowry.

Neither was intended to be more than a personal view. If we take them as general realities we are acknowledging genius. Chance, perhaps, played its part. Instead of Lowry we might favour Grimshaw's lyrical scenes of Liverpool docks and Hampstead streets. Instead of Constable's pastoral idylls there are the moors and marshes which are more typical of England. But Constable had the greater eye than George Lambert or James Ward.

Kenneth Clark wrote of Constable 'catching nature unawares'. The natural world is not a finished stillness, although we think of a perfect summer's day like that. Nature is perpetually active in cloud formations, wind, rain, not to mention the growth — and decay — of its organisms. Only by discovering the active life of landscape was Constable able to convey the whole truth rather than the picturesque surfaces. It was much harder to do this at Dedham. The inhuman majesty of Gordale Scar, say, does half the work.

By portraying the vitality beneath the pastoral stillness, as Clark pointed out, Constable anticipated the Impressionists. The active life of nature could be shown only obliquely or with a discretion which forbade the precision of realism. Imagine a photograph of an everyday scene with a blurred image of an ethereal form caught in one corner as it dashes out of sight. That is the abstraction which became the visionary landscapes loved by Peter Fuller.

In Maggi Hambling's 'Sunrise' sequence we see the Suffolk of the old masters revived with a resourceful strength to accomplish their traditional intentions. The technique is different. The spirit develops from generation to generation. The gentility of Constable, Gainsborough and Wilson Steer is undeniable. It is also deceptive. If we see only an historical ascendancy we miss the aesthetic values which transcend history.

The Suffolk estuaries penetrate a sea feeling some miles inland. The water seems ever liable to reclaim these precarious strands. It is an area susceptible to invasion, as the Martello towers show. Aldeburgh might have been the first settlement in Britain to have been taken by a Napoleonic

army after a landing on the curiously long shingle peninsula below the town.

Crabbe wrote: 'Of Sea or River, of a Quay or Street,
The best description must be incomplete.'

Words find the spirit of place elusive. They are like uninvited vessels in the natural harbours. Their presence itself destroys what they seek. Or so Crabbe believed.

He seemed to need, almost to predict, the painters who gathered on the Suffolk shore. They gather still, although it is sound which occupies the high ground in our time because of Benjamin Britten.

I believe his music should be heard within its originating circumstance for it to reveal the deeper meanings which made it. Britten was a demanding artist, at telling times uncompromising because of his search for expressive forms which could advance his art while encompassing the tradition which bore him.

It was an inscription of an intensely personal landscape identified in sound while relating to an actual world. By forming an accessible connection with Aldeburgh, Britten made a statement which is a coda to the musical canon. That is why the Aldeburgh Festival has a significance beyond any particular event staged there.

Britten's Aldeburgh takes its place in the wider landscape which is a shared imaginative resource capable of striking transformations of vision. To make unique claims upon one place is special pleading. But to make a particular claim is a necessity.

'When tides were neap, and, in the sultry day,
Through the tall bounding mud-banks made their way . . .
Where dwarfish flowers among the gorse are spread,
And the lamb browses by the linnet's bed.'

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[Geoffrey Heptonstall was until recently arts editor of *Cambridge Style.*]

# RUSKIN AND A NOBLE ARTIST

## by Judith Bell

IT would have gratified Louisa, Marchioness of Waterford, had she known that a hundred years after her death her watercolours would fetch up to a thousand pounds in the salerooms. Money did not concern her — she always had plenty of that — but recognition as a serious artist did.

As a child she already showed talent, application and a growing will to succeed. In the latter she was to be hampered by her aristocratic birth, beauty and a preoccupation with good works. Great ladies of a pious disposition were not expected to produce great paintings.

Louisa was born at the British Embassy in Paris where her father, Lord Stuart de Rothesay, was Ambassador. The greater part of her childhood was spent in Paris, with intervals at the family estate of Highcliffe Castle in Hampshire. Drawing and painting formed part of her education.

As she grew up, Louisa's matrimonial future gave cause for concern. As much of her time as social engagements permitted continued to be dedicated to painting, but now the docile daughter displayed determination and an unsuspected independence of mind.

In matters of rank and worldly possessions, Henry de la Poer Beresford, 3rd Marquis of Waterford, could not be faulted. His character, however, did not pass muster. A gambler, a fearless and reckless rider, the main occupations of 'The Mad Marquis' were hunting and playing outrageous practical jokes on his guests. But if Lord Waterford was wild he was also stubborn. Having fallen in love with Louisa at first sight he pursued her relentlessly. Good looks and a great deal of Irish charm played their part. Despite her mother's disapproval, Louisa accepted him and the unlikely match proved entirely successful. At Curraghmore, his estate in Ireland, the Marquis encouraged both his bride's artistic aspirations and her desire to improve the welfare of his tenants. She worked ceaselessly, never without a sketch book within reach. While embroidery frames occupied other ladies after dinner, by candlelight, she sought to master the effects of light and shade. 'I do love my work more than ever,' she confided to a friend, 'and long to do great work, meanwhile I labour at mere correctness'.

An introduction to John Ruskin widened her horizons, and for many years his ruthless criticism influenced her work. Typically, Louisa was not overawed by aquaintance with the famous critic. 'Ruskin is the reverse of the man I like and yet his intellectual part is quite my ideal', she stated, and on another occasion: 'There is a charm in Ruskin's writing that I find in no other, though he often provokes me, and I sometimes disagree with it'. Nevertheless she accepted her mentor's strictures with humility. Ruskin, convinced of her potential as an artist, endeavoured to discipline her talent, subduing her spontaneity, which he constantly condemned as 'blotting and dashing'.

Soon Louisa became as well known in artist's studios as in society drawingrooms. Her exhibits earned praise from famous names, but time and time again her fashionable status qualified their admiration. Watts believed that 'she was an artist greater than any England had produced, the circumstances of her life alone preventing her from working on to full achievement'. Rossetti considered her an excellent artist, 'One who would have been really great if not born such a swell and such a stunner'.

But such eulogies could not change Louisa's circumstances or her character. She remained inherently modest and steadfastly committed to acts of charity. Bereavement left her wealthier than before. After seventeen years her marriage ended tragically. Ironically, Lord Waterford, the matchless horseman, was killed when his horse stumbled at a small fence. Curraghmore passed to a younger brother, but the Marquis had bequeathed his Northumberland estate at Castle Ford to his wife. Eight years later she inherited Highcliffe Castle from her mother.

Louisa sublimated her grief by tackling the neglected state of her new home, renovating farms, cottages and the castle itself. She went daily to church and cared for the spiritual as well as the bodily needs of the villagers. Her painting, possibly her greatest consolation, showed increased confidence, and a project which united philanthropy with art proved her most successful achievement. A new school was built, and since her piety had always found inspiration in the scriptures, she chose biblical stories of children with which to decorate the walls, her tenants and servants acting as models.

During the latter part of her life Louisa presided over her two castles, wintering in Northumberland and spending the summers at Highcliffe. She continued to paint while Ruskin continued to scold. Throughout the twenty years of their correspondence his letters reiterated his pet theme: Lady Waterford would not allow herself enough time for her work to acquire the necessary finish.

'If it is always to be — Madame la Marquise s'amuse a être artiste — instead of — l'artiste s'amuse a être Marquise — then your work will never be good for much.' She should submit to the dull labour of mastering technique, study the old masters. Her suggestion of making a sketch from Titian aroused his scorn. A painstaking copy of a small section, about two inches square, would reveal where her own efforts failed. Her sketches, he insisted, merely showed what lay within her powers to do given the necessary perseverance.

Sympathetically, he wrote, 'I know perfectly well how miserable you must be seeing the grace leave your drawing as you finish it more but I assure you, you must make yourself do it that way'.

Genuine as their friendship was, Louisa's social obligations irked him, while her failure to achieve accuracy drove him to outbursts of fury. 'You have never drawn a complete outline of anything... you have played with your great powers, thrown them all down like toys for children to play with... content to have it said in every English drawingroom, over the coffee, "How clever Lady Waterford is".' Had Ruskin appreciated Louisa's

limitations he would have helped her more.

In the portfolios of her work now in the Victoria and Albert, and British Museum, it is interesting to detect the conflicting impulses which compelled her to paint; on the one hand a sensual enjoyment of colour, form and movement, on the other a desire to communicate her religious beliefs. In some instances, where the conflict is resolved, it is possible to understand the esteem in which she was once held.

A pen and ink wash of Christ walking on the water has tremendous power. The boat heaves dramatically out of the sea, the rhythmic straining of the oarsmen contrasts vividly with the clean, unsentimental lines of the standing figure.

In the drawing called, 'Signing The Indenture For Sea' Louisa has laboured to achieve finish. The shading is meticulous and overworked, the group of men lifeless, and the emotional content trite.

She was at her best when working at speed — a habit so deplored by Ruskin. The influence of the Pre-Raphaelites can be seen in her draperies, but these are not static, they flow with the bodies, an integral part of the composition. In these collections her landscapes are niggling — with one exception. A study for winter, a near abstract pattern of trees in greys and ochres, might have been painted today. Artistically, her instinct was sound, the desire to moralize led her astray.

Childless, Louisa painted children with tenderness and assurance. One particular face recurs frequently, usually as an angel bearing some musical instrument. This infant was perhaps one of her relatives, one of the models for the school frescoes, or her own idealised invention. A watercolour of this impish child holding a chestnut leaf charms with its spontaneous gaiety. The lightest of brush strokes suggest the floating hair behind the forward movement of the body against briefly indicated foliage.

After Louisa's death, message pictures soon went out of fashion. Titles such as, 'The Memory Of When My Mother Used To Take My Hand In Hers To Say Our Father' or 'Mother And Angel Watching Over A Dying Child' might have drawn tears from Victorian eyes, but did nothing to enhance her reputation. It seemed probable that her work would be forgotten until 19th century paintings increased in value once again.

She still may be thought a noble amateur, but one whose talent is not only recognised, but in demand.

# CONTEMPORARY PAINTINGS AND SCULPTURE ON CHRISTIAN THEMES 1920-1980

## by Rosemary Markham

THE Methodists's art collection of contemporary paintings and sculpture on Christian themes 1920-1980 does not have an exclusive character. Artists represented may be famous or not; may be Quaker or Jew; may be of Methodist, Church of England/Wales or of Roman Catholic persuasion; or they may be hovering between faith and doubt. The touchstone is quality and accommodation within the orchestration of the whole. Thirty works were mounted in Turner House, Penarth, South Glamorgan, branch gallery of National Museum of Wales in September-October 1990, supplemented for that occasion by four works from the Museum and seven privately owned works. Since then, the collection has increased to thirty-four works, and they are booked for St. Giles, Oxford, Easter 1992; and in 1993 for Farnham, then Winchester Cathedral for their 900 years Celebrations.

This collection is not an accidentally aggregated accumulation of bequests and gifts. It is an intellectually positioned enterprise. The Revd. Douglas Wollen, backed by Dr. John Gibbs, deliberately directed energies in the early 1960s to purchasing fine art reflecting modern Christian attitudes. They went on the Bond Street crawl, attended auctions, commissioned. Their finances were slender: £5,000 from the Gibbs Trust stretched eventually to £7,000 for the acquisition of Graham Sutherland's 'Deposition' and William Roberts' 'Crucifixion'. They did not bury their talents though financial gain was not their goal. They were refreshingly free of investment bother and, thirty years on, probably rejoice that religious art does not command the market.

Several resilient identities are represented including Roy de Maistre with 'Noli Me Tangere' where Christ has become a meditation focus, his triumph having crystallised out of his torture, to which formalised reference is made by cryptic darts of line and sombre colours. In William Roberts's 'Crucifixion' there is no triumph but the artist's. This picture, originally bought by Augustus John, looks to be reductionist in spite of its vigour and pictorial fullness, and Roberts pursues this paradoxical approach. Painting in his angular, full-bodied, particularising way, insinuating visual and narrative details, he powers his ironic effect. Identities are blurred. The Saviour is a riddle, enclosed by, indistinguishable from the material, unenlightened world. The ego-conscious soldiers are as far from military discipline as from ogling reverence, let alone acuity which they think is displayed in their haggling. They are blind to Christ hanging there, deaf to the Voice-Over, dead to 'the ubiquity of a vast concern' (R. S. Thomas).[1]

Eularia Clarke also takes a clear look at people though in calmer context. She paints a twentieth-century-style picnic, in 'The Five Thousand'. Little detached groups parcel themselves out across the pasture, no-one

checking the others are fed, nor attending to the voice of the altar. Clarke controls her oils to silhouette their separateness, their anchored-down condition. Ceri Richards, in a pencil and wash 'Supper at Emmaus' that sings with spontaneity, notes human limitations and clumsiness by exaggerating feet. But the third person at the table also has this seeming guarantee of flightlessness: yet when he leaves it is not in a traveller's usual direction. Richards' line glitters as he catches the vague astonishment flapping about the disciples' faces. Even they found it hard to borrow from mystery.

Two thousand years on, it is harder. Even so, the mystery is still around. 'Uneasy fossil,/In the mind's rock' (R. S. Thomas).[2] Hence the current's agitation along the strong compositional wires of Georges Rouault's series of engravings, 'Miserere'. Two are here, not looking like engravings because he refined them subsequent to the engraving process. Each work is unique, and if a viewer is perplexed enough to go on looking, that is part of the power. The subject was not simply the usable past for Rouault. He was seriously into it, and took up the challenge of the ideological hazards — the cry of anguish that demands a contradiction and is still demanding it. Elizabeth Frink doesn't mollify Golgotha either. In the colourlessness of 'Pieta' (ink and wash) one senses the hell.

Frank Roper, often oblique, is here very literal in his four Stations of the Cross, relief sculptures. So his 'Deposition' is foil to Sutherland's which is characterised by refined use of stylisation. Subject, treatment and idea austerely converge in this tautly sectioned, allusive composition painted in greyish browns and pale fawns. It has a momentous, psychic presence. It is frightening. In fact, while on tour to a school, it so disturbed a pupil that she took it, tore it from its frame and threw it through the train window as she returned home. It was found, restored in both senses, and Sutherland signed it, not having done so before.

The other works have also been restored — not by the Sutherland restorers but by the National Museum of Wales. While concentrated at the Methodist College, Southlands, some were attacked by damp. A change of staff there had resulted in temporary loss of touch with the purpose of the collection. It is now in exhibition condition.

Iselin paints a hypnagogic vision and John Reilly's Lazarus spirals off into the vortex of a new identity. Francis Hoyland, seeing past and present simultaneously, modernises anachronisms (though phrasing his subjects in a choppy way, the polyptych). The massacre of the innocents continues. Man lives as if above nature in creating such aberrations as explosives timed to go off in time. You could infer despair but because of the inclusion of the Good Samaritan, whom he also contemporises, Hoyland indicates we have choice.

Some may be surprised that Edward Burra can be appropriated to the Christian cause but he is a lively interpreter and essential to this convergence of approaches. 'The Pool of Bethesda' is presented by Burra as a stage with a star persona — a Morality Play. This tour de force pounds on to overlapping sequences, none of which are an after-thought. There

is a concentration on atmosphere, on strange, dynamic effects, a barbarism in spite of the choreographed style. With a bravura that only a master could bring off, the picture raises the idea that the pool can neither bubble nor heal if as impaired as the people who approach. And from the way Christ looks, he will champion this backlash. 'Ebbw Vale'[3], one of Burra's last works, makes it very clear how the artist regarded technological developments that poison land and air. There are new rules to this healing. Mankind must have certain insights that must precede full acceptance and understanding of the doctrine of salvation.

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NOTES

1. 'Perhaps'. *Frequencies.*
2. 'Poet's Address to the Businessmen'. *Tares.*
3. National Museum of Wales, not in this exhibition.

The pictures' permanent site is The Methodist Church Division of Education and Youth, Chester House, Pages Lane, Muswell Hill, London N10 1PR. Telephone: 081-444 9845. They will be on view by appointment and on open exhibition occasionally in the future. They may be loaned out as a complete exhibition or individually.

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# LORD CLARK'S CIVILISATION REVISITED

## by John Rossi

TWO decades ago television and the artistic world was astounded by the sensational success of Kenneth Clark's history of western art, *Civilisation: A Personal View*. It was a brilliantly successful attempt to encompass the sweep of the plastic arts from the tenth century to the present. Both encyclopedic in scope and highly personal in tone *Civilisation* was the most successful documentary in the history of television. It revolutionized the documentary format preparing the way for later personalized interpretations such as Jacob Bronowski's *The Ascent of Man* and Carl Sagan's *Cosmos*.

Following his triumph on television Clark transformed the series into a book. Like the TV series the book was a massive success selling over a million copies. Again Clark was a ground-breaker. For the first time a television documentary produced a book, not the other way around. Together the book and television made Clark into a celebrity, a symbol of all the best that the intellectual should aspire to. While enjoying success and the peerage he was awarded, Lord Clark had the good sense to distrust the whole idea. He once told his good friend the writer, Peter Quennell, that there 'must be something wrong with any best seller.'

The reasons for Clark's triumph with *Civilisation* tell us much about the movement of ideas in our time and they shed insight on the concept of intellectual reputation in the last half of the twentieth century.

Clark's enormous popularity contrasted sharply with his own elitist views about what constitutes great art. The greatest modern populariser of art paradoxically long believed that 'art was the opiate of the few'. All great art, he argued, 'was made by, or on behalf of, a small minority'. Clark had an overwhelming need to communicate feeling about works of art in words. Like one of his heroes, John Ruskin, Clark was a radical Tory from a wealthy family, but with a gift for making the most complex developments in the world of art clear and understandable.

Even before *Civilisation* Clark was a well-known, highly regarded scholar of art history. Books such as *The Nude* and *Landscape Into Art* brought him acclaim in academic circles as well as with the general public. Although deeply knowledgeable about the main currents of western art, Clark was intolerant of specializers with their proneness for obscurity. He had a compelling need to write about art in a highly individualistic way. This is the very first thing that strikes a reader (or viewer) of *Civilisation* — how idiosyncratic and personal a view it is. And yet how convincing.

Clark sweeps the reader along in his survey of western art, effortlessly showing how one era or movement merged into each succeeding one. He provides the reader with a convincing overview, sprinkled with insights, often paradoxical, and always provocative.

*Civilisation* consists of thirteen chapters, richly illustrated, dealing with ten centuries in western artistic history. 'Western' because although Clark

knew and appreciated non-western art, he believed 'that one should not try to assess a culture without knowing its language'. It was a personal interpretation in that Clark honestly admitted that his own taste influenced his choice of topics. He neglected the Golden Century of Spain, he shortshrifted Shakespeare's England and his own prejudices led him to underestimate movements like Mannerism and Expressionism both of which he disliked as forms of artistic expressions.

Each chapter examined a distinctive movement or feature of an era in the plastic arts. Clark began by discussing the survival of western civilisation at the hands of the barbarians in the often despised tenth century. Entitled 'The Skin of Our Teeth', this chapter sets the tone for what follows. He notes how tenuous the survival of a viable civilisation was. To those people who 'prefer barbarism to civilisation' Clark has a simple answer. 'I doubt they have given it a long enough trial... They are bored by civilisation, but all evidence suggests that the boredom of barbarism is infinitely greater.'

Clark defines the unique civilisation that emerged in the West as rooted in 'a modicum of material prosperity, some degree of permanence, just enough to provide a little leisure,' and most importantly, in 'confidence — confidence in the society in which one lives, belief in its philosophy, belief in its laws, and confidence in one's mental powers.' Not a bad definition.

The civilisation that emerged from the ruins of the tenth century Clark traces idiosyncratically in the remaining chapters. Some are better than others. It is obvious what individuals and what ages particularly appealed to Clark. The prose comes alive and occasionally Clark will come right out and express his personal likes and dislikes. Three chapters, I believe, could stand alone precisely because of these factors: 'Man — the Measure of All Things' about Renaissance Florence, 'The Light of Experience' which deals with 17th century Holland and one of Clark's favourite artists, Rembrandt and 'The Fallacies of Hope' which discusses Romanticism in Clark's unique manner.

Why these three? Because in each of these movements Clark found something about man's search for dignity and meaning made clear. All three focused on man as man and Clark was first and foremost a humanist in the best sense of that loose term. In the Florence of Federigo di Montefeltro, the Duke of Urbino, Clark found an inspiration and a motto for his own life — *essereu mano*, 'to be a man'. Clark admired the dignity, sense of honour and the development of the idea of the gentleman that emerged in this small fifteenth century city. But he also recognized the limitations of the Florentine Renaissance. It 'touched relatively few people. This is contrary to our modern sense of equality, but one can't help wondering how far civilisation would have developed if it had been entirely dependent on the popular will'.

Rembrandt's Holland elicited a profound response from Clark. Again he was touched by Rembrandt's dignity, his deep sense of humanity as well as the immense genius of his art. Clark was honest enough also to note how many of the admirable qualities of Holland were dependent on

the bourgeois capitalism that developed there. He was also impressed by the tolerance of Dutch society in contrast to the rest of Europe, its quest for beauty as reflected in the serene interiors of Ver Meer's paintings of everyday life. Again as in Florence, Lord Clark recognized these positive qualities as the work of a minority but now a corporate group, the middle class, whose numbers were growing.

Finally, Clark loved the Romantic era, its quirks, its bizarre characters and its open love of mankind. He moved knowledgeably from David through Ingres to the great school of Romantic artists like Delacroix and Turner. But it wasn't a painter who seized Clark's imagination in the Romantic era, it was the towering genius of Beethoven who summed up the age for him. Fidelio with its call for *freiheit* 'freedom', was the noblest characteristic of this heroic age for him. The loosening of the human spirit by Romanticism was a crucial development for Clark, if man was to be really free. This he sees as one of the age's greatest triumphs.

His final chapter which follows 'The Fallacies of Hope', dwells on the failure of the twentieth century to live up to the hopes inspired by Romanticism. Lord Clark was a conservative with a deep spiritual need that was filled at the end of his life when he became a Catholic. He had little faith about what science and modernity had created. He attempted to finish his book on a positive note but was hard pressed to do so. His final credo however serves him well. It shows him as the son of Urbino at his best:

'At this point I reveal myself in my true colours, as a stick-in-the-mud. I hold a number of beliefs that have been repudiated by the liveliest intellects of our time. I believe that order is better than chaos, creation better than destruction. I prefer gentleness to violence, forgiveness to vendetta. On the whole I think that knowledge is preferable to ignorance, and I am sure that human sympathy is more valuable than ideology. I believe that in spite of the recent triumphs of science, men haven't changed much in the last two thousand years; and in consequence we must still try to learn from history... I believe in courtesy, the ritual by which we avoid hurting other people's feelings by satisfying our own egos. And I think we should remember that we are part of a great whole, which for convenience we call nature. All living things are our brothers and sisters. Above all, I believe in the God-given genius of certain individuals, and I value a society that makes their existence possible.'

Not a bad credo to live by.

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# Literary Supplement

## CULTURE SHOCK IN EAST GERMANY

*Freedom was never like this: a winter's journey in East Germany.* Dan van der Vat. Hodder & Stoughton. £17.99.

Despite the fact that for most of its history the German nation has been fragmented the reunification of the post-war Germanies was inevitable. *Wir sind ein Volk* may well be the last cry of Risorgimento nationalism apart from Korea. Nonetheless as Dan van der Vat suggests in this readable and informative book, East Germany is likely to retain its separate identity for some time to come regardless of political union.

After a résumé of political events since the Second World War the author takes us on an anti-clockwise tour of east Germany, providing a brief history of each Land followed by what he calls 'snapshots', conversations with officials and professionals interspersed with his own pertinent comment.

It is unfortunate that in western eyes socialism has become virtually synonymous with communism and both with the Stalinist perversion. It is important to have in mind that the collapse of Communism throughout the Soviet bloc does not indicate the failure of socialism: socialism can hardly be said to have been tried in countries run by self-perpetuating Party elites answerable only to themselves. As the author reminds us, there was much in the Communist East that was worth preserving. The outstanding example was the system of health care based on the polyclinics where people went for all their medical and surgical treatment except serious operations and conditions which had to be treated in hospitals. All treatment from consultations through physiotherapy and minor operations to post-operative care was to be found under one roof, and was entirely free. This is now being replaced by the expensive West German model based on private medical insurance where profit-making is a major consideration. Another admirable institution was the state waste recycling system. Though East Germany had, and has still, the most appalling environment pollution record this was a plus point. Those who took the trouble to collect and deliver to local centres all re-usable materials were paid by the kilogram. Glass, metal, paper, wood, plastics, rags, all and sundry was gathered and recycled. The GDR was desperate for foreign exchange and so actively sought import substitution. The collection points were privatised with reunification, world market prices are lower than those originally paid by the GDR, and the public are no longer paid anything. Consequently the waste is dumped in the countryside or along the coast. However some efforts were being made even before reunification at least to discover the measure of pollution by a number of citizens' movements, and the situation may not be irretrievable.

Immediately after the act of political union Bonn appeared to adopt an attitude of laissez-faire, effectively leaving the east to sort itself out in a new rough competitive world for which it was not in any way prepared. That it did not collapse at once into large scale violence and chaos is due to the passion for order of the vast majority of Germans, and to the efforts of a number of prominent individuals such as Kurt Masur in Leipzig and Helmut Hartmann in Erfurt who in their different ways helped to cool the protest demonstrations and advise the perplexed.

In defence of Bonn it must be said they clearly faced some tremendous

administrative problems. The task of combining the two countries' armed forces while being committed to a 25% reduction by 1994 was one headache, the police and transport structure were others, and of course all senior officers in the east were by definition politically unacceptable. Nonetheless West Germany had never really given up its hope of a reunited Germany, so there had been ample time for someone to have drawn up a plan for that eventuality, if only in outline. The question must remain, why was this not done?

As it is the East Germans are being left to find their own salvation, after the euphoria second-class citizens on the wrong side of the tracks. Struggling with a collapsed industrial base once rated tenth in the world and highly efficient in Soviet bloc terms, prices that rose rapidly to match those in the West while wages remained depressed and a large proportion of the workforce had migrated westward or was unemployed, an invasion of predatory businessmen and 'financial advisers', takeover bids, and a flood of property claims from exiles, the psychological requirement is paramount. The people must change their entire habits of thought after forty years of socialism, loyal communists must become loyal democrats practically overnight, non-competitive servants of the state become suppliers of service and choice to their awakening customers.

But there is hope for the future. The German artisan tradition, small family businesses, the craft system of apprentice, journeyman, master are still intact. Administration is being reorganized with greater delegation of powers and decisions to the lowest practicable level. There are perhaps lessons here even for us.

Apart from a mildly irritating habit of coining such words as 'carpetbanger' (an opportunist West German seller of Thuringian sausages in East Germany) and his eccentric use of *sic*, Dan van der Vat's is political journalism of a high standard. This is a book that should be read, and read now. G. J. BONTOFT

## THE UNBUTTONED CHURCHILL

*Citadel of the Heart: Winston and the Churchill Dynasty.* John Pearson. Macmillan. £17.50.

Mr. Pearson, biographer of the unholy family, the Krays, brings his attention now to the Holy Family of British politics, the Churchills. But his book, hallmarked with the great gift of readability which characterised his previous essays into the biography of Ian Fleming and the familial histories of the houses — in ascending order of glory to divinity — of Sitwell, Devonshire and Windsor, is, as expressly stated by the author, not intended as hagiography or psychobiography. Neither is it intentionally iconoclastic, although it might, perhaps, be seen as the Graham Sutherland of Churchillian biographies. It puts one in mind also of the asparagus, Lyttonesque Holroyd, before his Shavian Doolittle capitulation.

Mr. Pearson sets deliberate, though well-mannered, siege to the family — 'This inner citadel of the heart held first and foremost his relations — in their widest sense'. (Violet Bonham Carter.) It is not, however, a demolition job. It is the uncensored story of Destiny and Demons. For the Churchills seem, like the Holy Family of America, the Kennedys, to have borne a curse: the multi-brachiate curse of Blenheim. The 'Black Dog' of the Marlboroughs, the chronic Marlborough melancholy, sat regularly upon the burly shoulders of Winston. It periodically beckoned him to suicide. On railway stations he avoided the edges of platforms; he kept clear of the rails of ships; the seventy-year-old Churchill was tempted by the sixth-floor balcony at Claridge's.

Interestingly, Churchill himself ascribes an outbreak of suicidal depression in 1910-1911 to the anguish caused by his duty as Home Secretary to decide the reprieves of condemned murderers. Another arm of the curse seemed to embrace the Churchill children; three out of four doomed. Randolph, the dauphin, ('Utterly unspoiled by failure,' said Noel Coward), dying young of flamboyant alcoholism; Diana killing herself at fifty-four; Sarah drowning in drink and drugs. Only Mary blossomed gracefully, without scandal and tragedy.

Mr. Pearson's book is rich in memorable *aperçus:* Blenheim — looking like 'the palace of an auctioneer who has been chosen King of Poland' (Horace Walpole) — bizarre as Gormenghast; the Duchess, whose face had started to collapse before the appalled 9th Duke's eyes, as the paraffin wax injected underneath the skin to preserve its beautiful contours began slipping inexorably towards her jaw, living in mutual loathing with his Grace, deploying her 'moving carpet' of King Charles spaniels to persecute him by fouling the priceless rugs. Another telling vignette: the housemaid who went mad, running through the state rooms, screaming, stalked by grim, powder-headed footmen.

Through this weird landscape struts the heroic bulldog figure of Winston. A great, but not a pleasant, man. The nineties poet, Richard Le Gallienne, meeting him in Minneapolis in 1901, described Churchill as 'The very pink of British insolence — an aristocratic bounder of the first water... one of the rudest, most arrogant young pups I've ever encountered.' The Churchillian attitude is well exemplified by that of the 10th Duke of Marlborough, who, when his valet forgot to put toothpaste on his toothbrush for him, threw it away shouting: 'Bloody thing doesn't work.'

It is indisputably demonstrated that Winston made a poor showing as a husband and the long and sorely tried Clementine came within a whisker of leaving him. He was not much better as a father. The truth is that there was little room in his heart for emotion other than the consuming ambition to emulate old John Marlborough, Nelson and Napoleon. He did not believe in God. He did believe in his divine right to mulct the rich and found a comfortable perch on the whales' foreskin-covered bar stools of Onassis's luxury yacht. Art was his solace. Churchill loved painting. But he had his own strict views. 'If I saw Picasso walking down the street... I'd kick him up the arse.' And that is what he would — and did — do to anyone who happened to differ from him.

Although, of course, no substitute for the official eight-volume biography, Mr. Pearson's book supplies a most enjoyable introduction to the unbuttoned, somewhat less than loveable genius (in the literal sense) of the politics of the past. Sir Winston's last words were, 'I'm so bored with it all.' Those will be the last words that any reader of this entertaining book will choose to use!

RICHARD WHITTINGTON-EGAN

## AN AFRICAN QUEST

*Ghosts of King Solomon's Mines: Mozambique and Zimbabwe — A Quest.* Graham Lord. Sinclair Stevenson, 1991. £16.95.

The second half of his title is more accurate if less eye catching than the first. For Graham Lord takes us on a sometimes painful journey of childhood nostalgia and personal ghost laying in Africa.

This is specially so of a visit to his much loved Eagles Prep School in Umtali. For his happy memories of the fifties are terribly overlaid by the massacre in the seventies of its missionary teachers, by black guerrillas; a

hard ghost to lay. The return to Beira, where he grew up and the once beautiful Portuguese colony of Mozambique is full of other shocks. For fifteen years of black Marxist rule have reduced it to a fourth world dump; though grey soviet ships still uncertaintly dominate the port. Mozambique, feels Lord, is a warning of what Zimbabwe that jewel of Africa according to Mugabe and Nyerere could yet become. It might be more instructive to compare it with that other British supported jewel of Africa, Kenya. For they share the overwhelming problem of population, nowhere mentioned in this book. Kenya has the highest birthrate in the world; Zimbabwe lags not far behind. A hundred years ago, there were under a million; today over seven million people surge over Rhodesia, due to white peace, prosperity and medical development.

Graham Lord's very brilliance as a journalist seems to detract something from his book which sometimes reads like a series of articles with irritating repetition. Twice we have the African anthem; three times he is put out of a restaurant by an African for being tieless and so on. But it is a compelling read. Mr. Lord did not meet Mr. Mugabe but he records three interviews with the white giants of Rhodesia. They had completely different view points: Garfield Todd the New Zealand missionary, prime minister in the fifties and open supporter of Mugabe's guerrillas; Ian Smith, right-wing perpetrator of UDI in 1965, and in the middle the wise old giant of the Federation, Sir Roy Welensky. All three firmly agreed on the endless perfidy of British Governments; even kindly Sir Roy found it difficult to forgive Messrs. Macmillan and Mcleod for their double dealing. Sir Roy, engine driver, boxer and prime minister seems to cover the whole history of his country. His father walked up to Bulawayo in 1893; his mother followed by wagon in 1895. He tells the story of how his mother kept meat good in the heat. She smothered it with fat in the morning and hung it out at the back of the wagon. It quickly accumulated dust. and in the evening she just tore off the thick crust of dirt with perfectly kept meat inside. Mrs. Beeton please note!

Sir Roy's dream of a multi-racial Central African Federation sounds golden in these harsher times, but how much better for Africans than the present shambles in Zambia and Malawi. It may yet be that if Zimbabwe can weather the approaching political storms as communism, unlike the State, withers away, she will emerge as the jewel of Africa, brighter than even Rhodes dreamt.

MOLLY MORTIMER

## THE JUVENAL OF FLEET STREET

*A Dubious Codicil, an autobiography.* Michael Wharton. Chatto & Windus. £15.99.

For thirty-three years from 1957 Michael Wharton, disguised as Peter Simple, wrote his 'Way of the World' column for *The Daily Telegraph*: 1,000 words a day on any topic, and in any way he liked. Its mordant, ironic tone is recaptured in this follow-up to his first volume of autobiography, *The Missing Will* (published in 1985). In his second volume, he tells of his campaign for sanity and standards in what was becoming a permissive society, a campaign against the pornography and homosexual lobbies, against the BBC, against the so-called multicultural society, and against a UNO which was dominated by Third-World tyrannies and petty tyrannies — to name only a few of his targets. We meet again those creations of a vivid imagination — Mrs. Dutt-Pauker, 'the Hampstead thinker', Julian Birdbath, the literary critic, and Alderman Foodbotham, the Bradford municipal Colossus. Despite his conservatism, it did

not extend to his own unconventional life-style; he is frank about his love affairs or near-love affairs with people and places, and his drunken orgies and occasional states of absence of mind, which made the production of copy, like the appearance of the daily paper, a constant surprise.

His book is also a roll-call of his colleagues, with comments, some kind, some acerbic: 'Perry' and 'Claudie' Worsthorne (whose real name is not Worsthorne anyway), the blind and saintly Peter Utley, with his coterie of glamorous secretaries, Colm Brogan with his impenetrable Glasgow accent, and editors Colin Coote and Donald McLachlan, Colin Welch, Bill Deedes, and 'the Master Insulter' Philip Weston — so it is also a rich treasure trove of gossip about other people. Like all satirists, he ranges from the shrewd to the sad, with interludes of riotous behaviour, and always with a sense that somewhere (but not on the street of shame, or even in its pubs) he will find an inner serenity. Some of the places he sought it in unhinged his mind and gave him 'turns' — perhaps a suitable state of mind one might think for a satirist?

France, Germany and Wales brought some balm — but his Luddite spirit never took easily to the modern world, or to its most conspicuous invention, the motor car. To find peace with certainty he usually returned to his native Yorkshire, and in particular found relief — and refreshment — most often in one of the most beautiful parts of Old England, the Eden valley in Westmorland. But, whatever his state of mind or body, or wherever he found himself — even the top of a Clapham or Putney bus — he could still turn out 1,000 words of sparkling prose a day on any subject. As this book demonstrates, he still can, *aetas* 78. But not now of course in Fleet Street.

ESMOND WRIGHT

## A POET DOOMED TO DIE

*The Death and Life of Sylvia Plath.* Ronald Hayman. Heinemann. £16.99.

The Estate won't like it. Facts hurt. After the last two, famously foiled and fettered (in part) attempts at a Life by women writers — Lynda Wagner-Martin (1987-8) and Anne Stevenson (1989) — it is interesting to have a man's approach and attack. (Edward Butscher's pioneering critical biography, *Sylvia Plath: Method and Madness,* was published in New York in 1976. The Publisher's Note: *Mr. Butscher wishes it known that changes were made in his Introduction by hands other than his own* was attached to his collection of papers on the poet, *Sylvia Plath: The Woman and the Work* which was published in London in 1979.) Mr. Hayman's commissioned work does not arise from any compulsive attachment to Sylvia Plath, is obviously not vulnerable to description as feminist, and appears perfectly fair and objective. There is an 'investigative' air to the enterprise, which may jar a little, and the apostrophic style seems out of place — 'It's possible she'd arranged . . .' Mr. Hayman is an experienced biographer of difficult subjects such as Sartre, Nietzsche and Kafka and his skilfully organized and presented narrative creates an excellent, shortish Life, highly charged with the poet's own presence.

As a theme — for you must have a theme, now, after previous work, and to make a shape out of the large mass of the autobiographical writings — he has chosen the sharp point of the suicide and the lifelong drive towards it, as evidenced in the poetry, naturally. Of the new material, he has, for example, reinterviewed the last doctor, the G.P., Dr. John Horder, and Jillian and Gerry Becker, with whom Sylvia Plath spent her last weekend before she slipped

away in the chink of time on the Sunday night before the nurse arrived on the Monday morning. Mr. Hayman abstracts the remaining 'mysteries' of the death, such as the contents of the last letter to the mother, the question of whether or not there was a suicide note, and the identity of the man in the dark suit who attended the inquest. There is plenty about poor Assia Wevill, who did the bad thing, and died badly. She did not spare *her* child, Shura. Mr. Hayman thinks that Sylvia Plath intended to kill her two children, but relented.

It is becoming increasingly apparent, as more material leaks out, that what we are witnessing is a short lifetime's struggle with a severe endogenous depression. The strong family history on the father's side has been known for some time. Analytical therapy was never going to be the answer — as events proved. Invoking R. D. Laing, as Mr. Hayman does, is not a good idea. Sylvia Plath was not a schizoid person. At the end, she was observed to be 'confused' and 'rambling' and her neighbour, Trevor Thomas, reported that she spoke of a beautiful dream or vision. Mr. Hayman blames the mixture of prescribed drugs which she was taking and he may well be right. Additionally, she had recently suffered from influenza. She certainly balanced very finely between mania and depression. Dr. Horder said that there was no psychosis, and that had generally been the opinion in America at the time of her treatment there. The decision had been made that she should not be told about the familial depression. If she had known, the difference to her life and her poetry would have been incalculable and possibly cataclysmically severe. She might have been less hard on herself, and on others, but she might have felt even more doomed and powerless. Her mother might have been let off the hook, a little, but her father might have received even more posthumous odes of ambivalence. Through this germ of knowledge, the poetry would, undoubtedly, have been altered, not in its intensity, but in its imagery. Would the death at Yeats's house have come? Probably.

MOLLY TIBBS

## THE LEAST KNOWN EUROPEAN MEMBER

*Albania's National Liberation Struggle, The Bitter Victory*. Reginald Hibbert. Pinter Publishers. 269pp. £35.00.

The Balkans are proving dramatically and inexhaustibly the region of danger and trouble as the Serbo-Croat savage conflict proves once again. There is a neighbour likely to get more and more involved — Albania. It is the least known country in Europe. Any information therefore is welcome and valuable. Sir Reginald Hibbert's book has come out at the right time. He is a veteran diplomat, former Ambassador in Paris, and, as a young officer, he was sent to Albania in the critical years of the last war to help the resistance against the Germans and Italians.

His detailed first hand account of the efforts of the British missions, their failures and successes, their personal relations with the Albanian resistance fighters is really fascinating. One gets, for the first time, an account of how resistance worked, of the constant tension and stress the British operators had to work under, of the twists and turns in personal relations and also of the fiercely defended personal opinions of the British teams. These produced astonishing personal conflicts back at home years later.

As in neighbouring Yugoslavia there were two major groups fighting, the Partisans, led and largely organized by Communists, and the anti-Communist groups one could call Nationalists. As in the Yugoslav case Whitehall gradually

and rather uneasily gave most of its support to the Partisans although they were also made up of groups that were rivals and there was always the danger of a group not carrying out the agreed action, often at considerable risk for the British involved. Even today bitter arguments are launched that suggest that there would not have been such trouble in Yugoslavia if the British had supported the Monarchists instead of the Partisans.

The author provides a detailed history of the Albania Communist Party which was only formally set up in 1941. In Albania, as in the Russian Republics, the Party is the story of men who rise by fighting their comrades in the first place. In Albania it is the remarkable Enver Hodsha and his rival, whom he managed at last to eliminate, Mehmet Shebu. They and others are dealt with fairly and one begins to understand the key element of personal infighting that is present in every Communist Party and contributed to its downfall. But it shows also that a new, different and unexpected set of devoted operators could some time or other revive a quite different Communist Party.

The author also gives a fascinating picture of the country, its people and its history. Since Albania is so little known and is now becoming a late member of the European Community this is most helpful and fascinating. The Albanians are the most ancient and least organized of the nations of Europe. They are really as exceptional as the Basques. They are a mountain people divided in tribes and clans all with their own traditions. One is inevitably reminded of the Scots and Welsh. They are Illyrians, believed to be older than the Etruscans in Italy.

They are split by religions and tribes. Their three-and-a-half millions live in steep valleys and harsh mountanns. There are the Roman Catholic Mirdites and Mallissory in the North, the Moslem Tosks in the Centre and the Ghegs in the South, some Greek Orthodox, mixed with the Greek ethnic minority. The principal Communist leaders were Moslems, the strongest religious group in the country.

Albanians, and this is important today, have a long record of being soldiers, fighting especially for the Turkish Sultans. They fought for the Roman Empire too. The Turks ruled Albania for 400 years. But they did not much interfere in the affairs of the tribes.

Their national hero is George Skanderbeg who fought the Turks for years in the 15th century. It is that image of the tribal leader that has determined the history of the country. An Albanian 'nation' was only beginning to be organized after the Balkan wars. The Turks had organized four administrative districts or Vilayets. But the southern one, Janina, is now Greek, the eastern one, Monastir-Kossovo, is Yugoslav and only Scutari-Schkoder, the northern one is Albanian. In the north are ancient tribal customs like generous hospitality. Blood feuds are still vibrant. It is significant that only from 1920 Albanian was printed, and that in the Latin alphabet, despite the Moslems being the strongest group. Its borders drawn in 1913, after the Balkan Wars, were only confirmed in 1921. The Western powers agreed then to let the Greeks and Serbs (there was no Yugoslavia) have Janina and Kossovo respectively. But Albania was not settled. It became a restless monarchy and in 1939 Italy drove out the king and annexed it. Italians had held key ports like Durazzo and Valona.

The Communist ruler, Enver Hodsha, had to recognize the border that kept Kossovo in Yugoslavia at the end of the war although the Soviet Union had played a negligible role in the resistance against the Germans and Italians. But Tito's break with the Kremlin in 1948 revived underground demands for

Kossova. For in 1941 the Italians and Germans had given Kossova to Albania. The author, who finished his book before the present conflict began in Yugoslavia foresees the issue of Kossovo as an explosive force of the first order. The Albanians, living barely on subsistence level with the rural areas barely in the 20th century, are too poor to fight a war but a decisively weakened set up in what was once Yugoslavia will arouse a fiercely felt temptation. Anyone interested in the eternal drama of history should not miss this book.

LEO MURAY

## SHORTER REVIEWS

**The War Diaries of Weary Dunlop: Java and the Burma-Thailand Railway 1942-1945.** (Penguin Books. £5.99.) This is the first UK paperback printing of Sir Edward Dunlop's war diaries published in Australia in 1986. Sir Edward Dunlop, nicknamed 'Weary', studied medicine both in Australia and in England. In 1942 as Colonel Dunlop he was posted to Java, to the Allied General Hospital. When Java fell he stayed with his men and endured the horrors of Japanese prisoner-of-war camps. (In one nine-month period in 1943, 69% of all English prisoners died.) Sir Edward was resourceful, brave and not without a sense of humour. These extracts from the diary are as written at the time and are a most moving portrayal of one of the British race's darkest hours. While admiting that 'there is much of sensitivity and creativity' in the Japanese character he warns that 'single-minded loyalty gives the system some of the defects of an insect society, with a pattern of blind, unswerving acceptance of leadership'. Despite the misery and evil the POWs endured a rare bravery and honour shines through to make this a most moving and still relevant book.

**The Penguin Dictionary for Writers and Editors.** (Viking Books. £12.99.) If you were born in Des Moines and did not become an athlete at Drake University, and if you later lived in Skipton, Yorkshire, with your nearest major reference library half-an-hour's drive away in Leeds, *The Penguin Dictionary* by Bill Bryson is precisely the pocket 'how-to-spell' and 'how-to-speak' book you would need. Despite its size, it is a rich and readable glossary. And it answers those questions that Americans, in particular, might find baffling: the subtle distinction in pronunciation should you meet the Marquis of Abergavenny rather than find yourself lost in the town. Ditto should you be asking direction to Fontainebleau, France or merely be asking for a hotel of that name in Miami, Florida — where it is conveniently pronounced Fountain Blue. If you studied it too closely, you would end in confusion — unless you kept it close at hand: *why* is Houston, Texas, 'Hewston', when Houston Street, N.Y. is 'Howston'? Luciano Pavarotti is in — to aid spelling presumably — Placido Domingo is not — with him apparently you can't go wrong. And not only is it a useful aid for Anglo-American understanding, it spares time to be wise: in distinguishing between 'simile' and 'metaphor', between 'wrack and ruin', and in advice on how to use 'hopefully' or 'forever'. It admits that of some words their spelling can be difficult, but that their content often defies analysis, so some words are simply listed without description: like pastrami and paté de foie gras. Bill Bryson has done not only a useful, but a delightful, job. (E.W.)

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# Contemporary Review

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## THE PROMISE OF NUCLEAR FUSION

### by Peter Hodgson

THE success of the recent experiments at Culham Laboratory near Oxford brings fusion power one step closer to reality. For years scientists have been using the giant machine called the Joint European Torus (JET) to see how the heavy isotopes of hydrogen can be burnt to give heat greater than that of the sun. This could eventually provide a source of virtually unlimited power.

It has long been known that if the heavy isotopes of hydrogen with masses two and three, called deuterium and tritium, could be brought close enough together they react and release a huge amount of energy. For this to happen, they must be raised to a very high temperature so that the increased thermal motion overcomes their electrical repulsion. In the hydrogen bomb this is done using the fission reaction as a detonator. For peaceful uses this reaction must take place in a controlled way.

Long ago a way of doing this was suggested, and indeed some of the first experiments were made by Dr. Anthony Ware in the late nineteen forties at Imperial College in London, a few doors away from the laboratory where I was doing research on nuclear physics. He used a glass torus (doughnut shape) about two feet in diameter containing deuterium gas and wound with a coil of copper wire. He sent a large electric current through the coil, and this turned the gas into a hot plasma, in which the electrons and nuclei are completely separated. He hoped that at these temperatures the deuterium nuclei would fuse, producing energy.

We freely discussed this work, but one day the Government realised that if the experiment succeeded it would be exceedingly important, so it decided that it should be secret. The Head of the Physics Department, Sir George Thomson, immediately said that in that case it must go out of his laboratory, so it was all loaded onto a lorry and taken to Aldermaston.

The fusion research remained secret for many years, and several much larger fusion machines were built. There was one in Harwell called Zeta, and another in Texas where Dr. Ware continued his work. The problems of achieving a fusion reaction proved to be much greater than was at first thought. It was not too difficult to make a plasma in the torus, but it wriggled around and very soon hit the walls and was destroyed. It would not stay still long enough for the reaction to get going and produce more power than was put into it at the beginning of the experiment.

To solve this problem, scientists built huge magnets around the torus to confine the plasma. Gradually they learnt how to keep the plasma still for longer and longer, inching their way towards the break-even point.

So far these experiments have been made using deuterium, mainly because it is readily available and easier to handle. However tritium is preferable for a reactor because the ignition temperature is much lower, a hundred million degrees instead of three hundred million degrees, and the energy yield per fusion is much higher. Unfortunately tritium is radioactive, so that the space inside the torus is radioactive after an experiment, making it hazardous to enter and make any needed modifications. Thus the sensible strategy is to make as many experiments as possible using deuterium, and then change to tritium. This is the step just taken at JET. A small amount of tritium was injected, and the fusion reaction took place in the plasma, producing an intense burst of neutrons and nearly two megawatts of power. Careful analysis of the measurements made during this experiment will enable the scientists to check the accuracy of their computer calculations and help them to plan the next stage of the experiments.

The JET machine is due to be upgraded over the next few years for further experiments, and plans are far advanced for an even larger machine called the International Thermonuclear Reactor (ITER). This will be a joint project between the European Community, the United States, the Soviet Union and Japan. The more recent machines are somewhat larger and more expensive than Dr. Ware's glass torus; JET is about 30 feet high and a man can walk inside the torus. It cost about £500m. ITER will be even larger and is expected to cost about £3 bn.

It is confidently hoped that ITER will achieve the break-even point, and that this will show how a fusion power reactor could be built. Even then, it is likely to be some decades before a fusion power station is providing electricity on a commercial scale. A realistic estimate for this is the middle of the next century.

Is all this huge effort worthwhile, and how does it fit into our plans for producing the energy we need in the twenty-first century? In the next few decades, oil will become increasingly expensive, and most of the world's energy needs will be provided by coal and nuclear. Awareness of the pollution associated with coal power, together with the greenhouse effect, is likely to make it less favoured compared with the new generation of nuclear reactors. At some point, possibly in about forty years, the cost of uranium will rise to the point that fast fission reactors become economic. By that time fusion reactors should be nearing the stage of commercial viability, and will be built when their cost becomes competitive.

It is often said that one of the great advantages of fusion reactors is that they produce no radioactive waste products. This is unfortunately untrue, though the radioactivity produced by fusion reactors will be substantially less than that from fission reactors. Of course there are no fission products, but fusion reactors do produce radioactivity. The fusion

reaction produces its energy in the form of an intense flux of neutrons, which are slowed down in the material surrounding the reactor, raising it to a high temperature. This heat may be used to generate electricity in the same way as in coal and nuclear power stations. Inevitably this material becomes highly radioactive, and will have to be changed from time to time. It is therefore important to choose this material to minimise the radioactivity produced and to prolong its useful life, and some of my own research is devoted to this end.

The radioactivity produced in fusion reactors can of course be safely contained so that it causes no health hazard, using essentially the same techniques that have been developed to deal with the waste from fission reactors.

It is also claimed that fusion power will rival the renewable energy sources such as solar, tide and wind power, particularly regarding their effects on the environment. It should be noted that the word 'renewable' is somewhat misleading; these sources will last only as long as that large unshielded nuclear reactor usually called the sun. Quite possibly the uranium in the earth, and certainly the deuterium, will last as long. However, the important consideration is that these so-called renewable energy sources are not practicable for the really large-scale energy production that the world really needs. They are excellent for many relatively small-scale applications, particularly in remote areas, and deserved to be developed to the full, but they will never be able to compete with coal and nuclear on a large scale. The main reason for this is their intermittent nature, which can never be changed. We need a power source that is reliable even on still, cloudy, winter days. They are also inherently inefficient, as the energy is thinly spread. No amount of research can ever change this, unfortunately. This in turn implies that the solar, tidal and wind energy collectors are relatively costly and large structures that are damaging to the environment.

The main reason for favouring fusion reactors, apart from the reduced production of radioactivity, is the almost unlimited amount of energy that they will make available. Deuterium is present in ordinary water to an amount of one part in about six thousand, and tritium can be made from lithium in the reactor itself. Taken together, the energy resources for fusion have been estimated to well over a million times that of all the oil and coal put together. For uranium the comparable figure is about a thousand, so even when all the easily obtained uranium is exhausted the fusion reactors will still be there to give us the power we need.

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# MAXWELL AND MELMOTTE: FACT AND FICTION

## by Richard Mullen

'I wouldn't believe it, if I read it in a novel,' claimed Kevin Maxwell to a crowded press conference in New York last December. If the collapse of the family fortune forces young Maxwell to abandon the luxurious speed of Concorde for the slower delights of economy class, he might wile away his time with a long novel: Anthony Trollope's *The Way We Live Now*. Trollope's swindler sounds like Robert Maxwell in a top hat.

The parallels between Robert Maxwell, the greatest fraudster in modern British history, and Augustus Melmotte, the crooked financier in the novel, becomes more fascinating with each fresh revelation. One of the delights in reading Trollope is to see characters that are so similar to our contemporaries. As a columnist in *The New York Daily News* — in its pre-Maxwell days — said, Trollope's characters may at first seem remote because of 'their incomes and some of the moralities, but you'll know them'. For years, it has been obvious that there could only be one modern Melmotte.

When Robert Maxwell plopped into the sea off Tenerife in November, his final splash seemed like the rest of his career: spectacular. Those forced to provide some quick tribute fell back on well-worn platitudes: he was 'larger than life' or some similar tripe. Another favourite was a version of what Trollope had said of Melmotte: he was 'unlike other men both in his life and in his death'. For a few days, there were other sickening pretences of sorrow from people who had long detested him. Once the inquest had at least proved that it was his corpse that was found and hurried off to Jerusalem's Mount of Olives for burial, people began to ask questions aloud that had only been gossiped about in whispers in the wine bars of the City. Within days the answers bubbled up like slime from a bursting sewer.

In *The Way We Live Now*, several biographies of Melmotte appear within weeks of his death. The same is now happening with Maxwell. There had already been a few biographies of the mogul. One by Joe Haines read like a life of a medieval saint. However in 1988 Tom Bower brought out a biography of Maxwell which led to a cascade of writs. One of the secrets of Maxwell's power was his use of the libel laws. When anyone attempted to describe his activities, he launched a battery of writs at them. No author can withstand such a massive attack. Not content with attacking Bower, Maxwell issued writs against any bookshop that dared to stock Bower's book. Mr. Bower has, at last, a sweet revenge: his revised book has appeared in paperback a month after its subject's death and in time to attract great publicity.

Tom Bower's *The Outsider* (Mandarin Paperback, £4.99) provides the best description of Maxwell's rise from poverty in Ruthenia, on the eastern border of Czecho-Slovakia, to phenomenal riches and power in London.

No doubt other biographies of Maxwell will appear in the future, but Mr. Bower's well-researched book will long remain as the source to which all other writers must turn. He has performed a splendid service in describing the rise of this fascinating and evil man.

Anthony Trollope would have recognised Maxwell for what he was long before he met his end on his yacht. Trollope was a profound observer of human nature. He also took a constant interest in contemporary affairs. Indeed, he was the founder of *Fortnightly Review*, which is now incorporated in *Contemporary Review*. Thus we regard him as one of our founders. Trollope would not have accepted some of the claims put forward by modern literary critics about the over-riding importance of novels. Nevertheless, he always stressed that a novelist — at least a good novelist — had to write with a moral purpose: 'in writing novels we novelists preach to you from our pulpits'. The Maxwell affair — the greatest financial scandal of this century — shows that Trollope's portrayal of a great swindler is amazingly accurate. Unfortunately for all those whose pensions have been stolen, no one in authority listened to Trollope's warning.

The description in *The Way We Live Now* has a familiar ring: 'Melmotte himself was a large man . . . with heavy eyebrows, and a wonderful look of power about his mouth . . . The countenance and appearance of the man were on the whole unpleasant and . . . untrustworthy . . . He looked . . . a bully'. He was 'unlike other men both in his life and in his death'.

When this 'Satan of speculation' pops up in London in the 1860s, no one is sure where he comes from or even if he is operating under his true name. Gossip abounds about his origins and his enormous wealth, which appears to spring from shady deals in France, his wife's country. People chatter about his secret plans for vast enterprises in Russia and China. Politicians, journalists, and stockbrokers fawn over a man 'who could make or mar any company by buying or selling stock'. Not satisfied with financial power alone, Melmotte takes up politics: 'Brought into the world in a gutter . . . he was now a member of the British Parliament' although he had 'been cheating and forging and stealing all his life'.

He makes one fatal mistake by over-extending his financial schemes into America. (As Tom Bower shows in his book, Maxwell was to make the same mistake.) To finance this, Melmotte commits 'forgery upon forgery' — mortgaging property before paying for it. When rumours begin to swirl about his dishonesty his shares plummet: 'Everybody now knew that it was a positive fact that the charges made against the man were to become a matter of investigation'. After a final night of drunkenness, the evil bully commits suicide.

How is it that an 1873 novel can give us such an insight into a 1991 collapse? The answer is that Trollope wrote it in the midst of financial scandals as sordid as ours, scandals including well known names involved in sleazy speculation, often in America. In this novel, he points to his favourite biblical warning: You cannot touch pitch without being defiled. Roy Greenslade, a former editor of the *Daily Mirror*, has recently given us a modern rendering: 'No human being who spent time working' for

Maxwell, 'is really unsullied by it.'

Although Trollope drew on memories of earlier scandals like the collapse of the 'Railway King', George Hudson, he knew that the greatest Victorian swindler was much in the news while he wrote his novel. Baron Grant — who had begun life as Albert Gottheimer, became Albert Grant MP, and then acquired an Italian title — was defrauding small investors like widows and clergymen anxious to provide for their old age. Grant's companies raised £24 million. When his empire collapsed, investors were lucky to get a few shillings in the pound. Trollope did not need to wait for Grant's inevitable fall to fashion Melmotte. Such men were well summed up in a popular ditty:

> Honours a King can give, honour he can't,
> And Grant without honour is a Baron Grant.

For Trollope there was a far worse danger than Melmotte. An old Tory squire in the novel — a man much like his creator — says that Melmotte was a 'hollow vulgar fraud from beginning to end.' It was those public figures who went to his 'feasts' who were the real menace. Because of them 'men reconcile themselves to swindling'. That is why 'the existence of a Melmotte is not compatible with a wholesome state of things'.

Earlier this year, Robin Leigh-Pemberton, Governor of the Bank of England, gave a speech called 'The Way We Live Now'. He assured the Trollope Society that although 'recent so-called City scandals look uncomfortably similar in some respects to the Melmotte debacle... things are very much improved'. Anthony Trollope, however, knew that human nature never changes and that is why there will always be Grants and Melmottes and Maxwells. Twelve decades after *The Way We Live Now*, fiction has once again become fact.

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[Dr. Richard Mullen is the author of *Anthony Trollope: A Victorian in His World* (Duckworth).]

# DANGER IN PARADISE

## by Mandy Garner

COOL whispering coconut palms swaying in the breeze as the seas lap lazily at the sun-drenched shore. A garland of more than 1,200 islands bursting with multi-coloured coral set in the sparkling Indian Ocean, the Maldives are the very image of paradise. Come to the Maldives, leave your troubles behind.

Tourism accounts for a growing percentage of the Maldives' economy. At present, it is around a fifth of the Gross Domestic Product. Coral reefs and pearly beaches are what every jaded westerner seems eager to buy. Yet despite the peaceful exterior, way down deep under the surface tranquillity, the Maldives are said to be built on a volcanic ridge.

On 18 November 1990, a newspaper editor, Mohamed Shafeeq, was arrested and reportedly placed in stocks. He was accused of 'terrorism'. In December a new Prevention of Terrorism Act was conveniently passed. The maximum penalty is death and the act is retroactive, in disregard of international human rights standards. At least seven other journalists, including Mohamed Nasheed, were arrested at the same time. Many of their names cannot be revealed for fear of reprisals against their families by members of the security forces.

Shafeeq, known to his friends as 'Sappé', is a well-known figure in the Maldives. A talented architectural graduate from the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, he returned home in 1989 and started up an independent weekly newspaper, *Sangu*, at the start of 1990. *Sangu* contained exposés of alleged official corruption, amongst items on health issues, poverty and sport. Football and especially Sappé's favourite Liverpool FC featured prominently. The issue just about to be published when Sappé was arrested was dedicated to an investigation of prison conditions in the Maldives.

Sappé is seen as somewhat of a cult figure in Malé, the capital of the Maldives. Friends say that the 28-year-old journalist is the latest in fashion and everyone rushes to copy his style. He ran a fashion shop in Malé and friends say he is the only person on the island to own a pair of raybans. He even designed the emblem to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Maldives' independence. This emblem is shown on Maldivian television every night.

His popularity, eccentricity and general air of cocky self-confidence coupled with his outspoken magazine articles singled him out as the obvious target for a government wishing to let its people know what happens to those who criticise authority.

He reports having received death threats prior to his arrest and he actually predicted his arrest to friends. In a letter written to a friend in September 1990, he wrote: 'If they can't find any reason for my arrest then they will frame me... the government wants to clean up the place before the SAARC summit this November'.

The South Asia Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) was due to meet in Malé in November and it is thought Sappé and the other journalists were arrested in order to stop dissenting voices reaching the ears of visiting foreign journalists. During the summit, Malé was put under night curfew and many people were arrested or searched. Those in the capital describe the atmosphere as that of a 'state under siege'.

The government charged Sappé with exploding a petrol can in a park after midnight and planning to blow up the SAARC conference centre which he himself had been asked to design, with the aid of two signal flares. Sappé had turned down the invitation to design the centre on the grounds that he did not want to contribute to 'President Gayoom's propaganda machine'. Three days before being taken to prison, Sappé was involved in a motorcycle accident and was still receiving treatment for concussion at the time of his arrest. The circumstances of the accident are unclear.

Other journalists arrested with Sappé have been charged with 'withholding information about the sabotage plan'. Human rights organisations including the writers' organisation International PEN and Amnesty International are investigating the charges. They believe that the journalists may have been tortured in pre-trial incommunicado detention to make them 'confess'. Such allegations of torture, if true, make it unlikely the journalists will receive a fair trial.

In his letter Sappé also foresaw the possible use of torture to induce a confession: '... The person who tortures ... is still strong and in position and would willingly give me a dose of his special treatment if he ever gets his hands on me, which may not be far away'. Sappé's confession was broadcast on Maldivian television.

Another factor in determining whether Sappé will be given a fair trial is his access to legal representation. Although allowed such representation, Sappé does not have a lawyer as lawyers are too frightened to oppose the government. Sappé has, however, been allowed to speak in his own defence. His trial began in October. In December, Sappé was sentenced to eleven years in prison.

Prison conditions on Dhoonidhoo Island Prison where Sappé is held are described as harsh. Prisoners say they are handcuffed so tightly that the cuffs bite into their flesh. The effects are felt long after release. Sappé is held in solitary confinement in a tiny four foot by seven foot cell made of corrugated iron which, in the fierce heat of the day, acts as a human oven. Prisoners are only allowed the minimum amount of water and this is served in an unwashed kerosene can, making it virtually undrinkable. Hygiene standards are very low and the food, usually fish (the staple diet of the Maldives where fishing is the main industry), is often bad, causing diarrhoea. Those involved in a 1988 coup attempt are held at Dhoonidhoo and many are still reported to be in solitary confinement after three years in prison.

Another journalist, found guilty under the new Prevention of Terrorism

Act was sentenced earlier this year to four and a half years' banishment to an outlying island for 'withholding information about the sabotage plan'. Mohamed Nasheed, an editorial assistant for *Sangu*, was also accused of 'withholding information about the sabotage'. At the time of his arrest, he was already serving a six months house arrest sentence for an article he wrote in a Sri Lankan newspaper alleging government ballot rigging in the elections. It is generally believed that the real reason for his arrest is due to interviews he gave to the BBC World Service and Radio Australia during the SAARC summit meeting in which he criticised the government's human rights record.

The Maldives achieved full independence from the British government in July 1965. They have had a chequered career, having been colonised by the Portuguese and Dutch as well. According to the 1968 constitution, the president of the newly independent islands, President Ibrahim Nasir, was given extensive powers, including the right to dismiss the Prime Minister. This he did in 1975 after a rumoured coup attempt. From then on, coup attempts were a regular feature, particularly in the 1980s under the new president, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, culminating in the 1988 coup attempt by mercenaries said to be Sri Lankan members of a Tamil Separatist group hired by a Maldivian businessman.

Following the coup and a general election, the new government committed itself to greater freedom. The independent press, led by *Sangu*, the first publication to be allowed to publish, began to flourish in 1990 and many of its stories dealt with allegations of government corruption, particularly in relation to Ilyas Ibrahim, the then Minister of Trade and Industries and the Deputy Minister of Defence and National Security. The Ministry of Defence fought back, alleging that the independent journalists had been involved in the 1988 coup attempt in which several people were killed. As a result, several of the journalists received death threats.

Sappé published one account in *Sangu* said to be from the families of those killed in the 1988 coup attempt. It stated: 'We have not yet forgotten the fact that you have slaughtered quite a large number of our brothers. It is our own blood that you have shed... Even though our government is afraid of you, we are not. When we take revenge on you for the blood you have shed on November 3rd [the day of the coup attempt], bones and muscles of your dead body will be picked up only by pedestrians'.

The police reportedly took no action when this threat was reported to them. Journalists also claim that their telephones were tapped on the orders of Ilyas Ibrahim and *Sangu* was confiscated for a short time in March 1990. Sappé said he had just escaped arrest in April. However, the independent newspapers were proving more and more popular with the public. The first issue of *Sangu* sold out in a week and a few months later people were queuing for it.

In April, the government was forced to set up a Presidential Commission to look into the alleged trading irregularities. Two directors of the State Trading Organisation (STO) were arrested and Ibrahim fled the country. In May, the President was forced to dismiss him from the Cabinet.

However, the government took the criticism of this minister as an attack on the whole Parliament and Cabinet hardliners, friends of the extremely powerful Ibrahim, began to respond. The backlash had begun putting the nail in the coffin of the liberalisation period.

In one of his editorials Sappé responded to the hardliners, stating clearly that criticism of one member of the government did not mean that the whole government was tarred with the same brush: 'Criticising the unjust actions of a single person in a government cannot be branded anti-government because one person does not constitute the whole government'. He warned: 'Those who use their position to gain unfair advantage will use everything in their power to stop those who criticise and there will be no limit to this use of their power... Criticism of this nature, based on facts, cannot be anti-government but helps the government present itself as willing to listen and ready to serve the country'.

An article written by Mohamed Nasheed in the April issue of *Sangu* compared the hardline backlash with the Chinese government's crack-down on dissent in Tiananmen Square. The article claims: 'Their [the hardliners] only aim is to brand those who are working for equality, those who want to know the truth, as traitors... We should never make the fist stronger than the word nor believe that the sword is mightier than the pen. The framework we have to work in is extremely narrow. Because abuse of human rights, torture in prisons, inequality and corruption have become the norm. They are in danger of becoming part of our culture'.

A few weeks after he had fled the country, Ibrahim returned and illegally contacted the two directors of the STO in prison. The phone conversation was taped by, among others, the parliamentary candidate who narrowly lost to Ibrahim in the 1989 elections. He and those who taped the conversation or listened to the tape were sentenced to six months' banishment. Ibrahim was beginning to reassert his power.

In June, President Gayoom ordered the closure of *Sangu* and two other independent magazines, *Manthiri* and *Hukuru*. However, Sappé and others were planning to get around this banning order by using printing presses from Singapore. They had been losing money on the magazine for some time by keeping down the price so that people could afford to read it. As a result, they had had to reduce the paper quality.

Despite the general repression in the Maldives at the time of Sappé's arrest, a campaign to free Sappé was orchestrated by his friends and supporters. 'Free Sappé' posters began appearing all over Malé and people wore black armbands in protest at his arrest, although several were arrested as a result. In Britain, Sappé's friends at Newcastle University have begun a vigorous campaign to free him. On the first anniversary of Sappé's arrest, they let off 365 white balloons outside the university.

The Maldivian government has responded to criticism of its human rights record, arguing that the retroactive implementation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act is valid because an elected government's decisions are sovereign. It is therefore 'wholly unfair to question the government of a Parliamentary Democracy as regards a clause of the law passed by its

Parliament'. The government further argues that since the Maldives is a Muslim country, governed by the Islamic Shariah law which considers terrorism a penal offence, the new act 'did not create a penal offence unknown to the 'national law'. This verbal smokescreen does not hide the fact that the United Nations specifically states that laws cannot be applied unless they are part of an existing national law. A 'national law' is understood to be a law written down in the statute books.

The government deny allegations that prisoners are badly treated. They say the four foot by seven foot prison cells on Dhoonidhoo Island are not small. They say that the reason a United Nations official was denied access to Dhoonidhoo Prison on his visit to investigate human rights abuses in the Maldives was because he had arrived at an 'inopportune moment' when security forces were too busy with arrangements for a visit by the Indian Prime Minister to escort him to the island prison.

The Maldives is a country of many contradictions: between the wealth and luxury of a tourism paradise and the overwhelming poverty of the majority of the Maldivian people; between a government dedicated to maintaining the status quo at any cost and a people clamouring for change and greater freedom. With the independent press in chains, the government will not bury the desire for a change from authoritarian rule, now reflected all over the world. By sticking its head in the golden sand, it is simply stirring the pot for a future of greater discontent and unrest which it cannot afford to ignore. Beneath the picture postcard façade, the Maldives' volcanic roots are beginning to rumble.

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In the March number of *Contemporary Review* the second article in our series by Dr. Anthony Gooch on Spain and the World will focus on *Spain and Latin America*. Lynne Patrick's article *The New Old People* centres on the plight of the American Indians.

# SYRIA PREPARES FOR TOURISM

## by Habeeb Salloum

TRAVELLERS who return to Syria after a few decades of absence are always astonished when they see that the former desert-edged road from the airport to Damascus is now hemmed on both sides with dense green trees. They are even more amazed when driving on the once barren Mount Qassioun, which overshadows the city, to see it green with trees and criss-crossed with roads, edged by newly built structures. It is as if there is a genie at work transforming the land. In spite of the continual cost of military preparedness and the corruption which comes with state controlled economies, the change in the country has been remarkable.

Damascus is now a modern world class city of almost four million people with eye-catching villas and palaces fast expanding in all directions. Its core is ringed by wide highways and the historic section is being renovated in anticipation of the tourist rush to come. Where once, at night, the sound of horns was deafening, the streets are jammed with noiseless autos, of course, spreading their pollution. Beggars who in the past annoyed tourists, are today rarely to be found. The police have made sure that most of them have disappeared from the streets. Some have been taken to special government welfare homes while others have been trained to fit into the work force. Only a few crippled men selling trinkets still try to make a living from the passers-by.

In the heart of the city, men and women who, in the past, milled about in colourful traditional Arab costumes are, today, mostly found in parts of the countryside and some of the old sections of Damascus. Men in business suits and a good number of women dressed in the most up-to-date 20th century fashions are what a traveller will see in modern day Damascus. On the other hand, the grip of Islamic fundamentalism appears to be on the rise and about half the women wear head scarves and heavy coats which hide the shapes of their bodies.

The transformation of the oldest continuously inhabited city on earth has been copied by all the Syrian urban centres. From Latakia in the west to Aleppo in the north and Deir ez-Zor in the east, the country is being reborn. Syria has managed to achieve a higher rate of progress than most developing countries, despite the state of almost constant war since the nation came into existence. In the last two decades, under the leadership of President Assad, more educational institutions, hospitals, housing, roads and a tremendous increase in the production of electricity have been achieved than in the previous half century.

I remember travelling in southern Syria during the early 1960s when poorly built villages of black stone and a lava strewn countryside were all one could see. This time, taking the same route, I thought that I was in a different world. Sparkling white towns were everywhere. The only black stones in sight were those dividing the tiny fields. In the same

fashion, a number of times during the late 1960s and early 1970s, I took the road east from Aleppo to Deir ez-Zor. As soon as we would leave Aleppo, it was desert land until the Euphrates. Today, one travels for over 60 miles through a countryside green with crops and trees. Newly built villages with their schools and hospitals, electrified like almost all Syrian towns, are sprouting out of the desert. Irrigation canals now cross a once barren landscape where even the camel was hard put to find food.

Free education in the last decade has virtually eradicated illiteracy. The thousands of children who, in the past, roamed the streets are now in schools. Syria is the only country in the Arab world where a child is educated in Arabic from kindergarten to the end of university. This has given people pride in their rich heritage. It will, no doubt, make them more able to meet the challenges of the coming 21st century in contrast to other Arab countries where educating students in foreign languages imbue them with an inferiority complex.

Women in today's Syria have officially been given equality to men. They have equal pay, opportunity and education. Many are doctors, engineers and almost one quarter of the Syrian parliament are women. Even though many of the traditional families are not happy to see their womenfolk in offices and factories, females are to be found everywhere in the work force. Universal education has made the women of the country a potent power in the economy.

Far-sighted planning and the now mostly literate peasants are transforming agriculture. A series of small dams, completed or under construction, and the huge Euphrates River Dam alongside the new ones being built on the Khabur River, have stabilized to some extent agricultural production — at one time totally dependent on the elements. Planting vast areas with forests and orchards, establishing countless numbers of chicken farms, improving animal and plant production, and drilling water wells in the desert, all have contributed to the country's near self sufficiency in food output. In addition, the government's raising of prices for farm products during the past two years has helped much in the good performance of the agriculture sector. Some food experts claim that Syria is well on the way to becoming another California.

Boosted by recent oil finds, Syria's oil and gas exploration and production are going full speed ahead. An increasing number of international oil companies have joined with the Syrian government in co-operation ventures and this has raised output to a near 500,000 barrels of oil per day. The rapidly expanding hydrocarbon industry is helping to reduce the shortage of hard currency which has squeezed the country for years. Increased oil exports have made possible the importation of consumer and luxury goods and enhanced a growing economy.

In anticipation of a projected tourist rush, Syria's road and railway systems have been upgraded and greatly expanded. All the large urban centres have been connected by new or rebuilt rail lines. The desert trails linking Damascus, Palmyra, Deir ez-Zor and beyond have been replaced by paved highways. A four-lane motorway has been completed connecting

the coast to the capital, and another between Aleppo and the Jordanian border is almost fully in use. Other new roads connecting the four corners of the country are under construction or in the planning stage. Along the edges of almost all roads, trees are being planted and watered by government workers.

Railways and bus companies like Transtour and Karnak, in addition to organized excursions, offer regular schedules at very low prices. Thanks to the Cham Palace Company, there are now, in most large cities, luxury hotels which can compete with the best in the world. The government has built schools to train their staff and those of other hotels, mushrooming in all urban centres. Having stayed in half a dozen of the Cham Palace Hotels, of which there are 13, I can testify to their excellent service.

In contrast to many large cities throughout the world, Syria's urban centres are safe. According to tourist officials, in the past decade there has not been a single incident where a visitor has been robbed or harmed. They went on to say that Syria has one of the lowest crime rates in the world. There is no doubt that the authoritarian grip of the government on the country helps to control criminals. To an outsider, Syria appears to be relaxed. During the three weeks in which I travelled about 1,550 miles to the four corners of the country, I was only checked twice, and these were near military establishments.

The Syrians are very hospitable to strangers such as Europeans and North Americans. Al-Ash related a story about the Canadian Consul in Sweden who was with a group touring Syria. A few miles before reaching Homs from Palmyra, he told al-Ash, who was the group leader, to let him off the bus and he would follow them to Damascus. He wanted to find out how the Syrians really felt about foreigners. After much discussion al-Ash allowed him to leave the bus with foreboding since the Consul could not speak any Arabic. That night, when the group was dining in the Damascus Sheraton Hotel, al-Ash was astonished to see him enter the room. The Consul excitedly told the story of how the ordinary Syrians he met treated him with thoughtfulness and generosity when he hitch-hiked, took a taxi and a bus. He could not believe that the people could be so kind to strangers.

For the projected tourist rush, Syria has gradually improved its Mediterranean coastline resorts from Ras al-Bassit in the north to Tartous in the south. The nearby green mountains covered with oak and pine, edged by long stretches of beaches, were part of the Crusaders' Middle Eastern realm. The range is dotted with their citadels, many of which are being renovated.

In other parts of the country a great number of historic ruins are being restored and made accessible to visitors. The string of new hotels in Palmyra, Deir ez-Zor, Aleppo, Latakia and Hama have made it possible to visit the adjoining ruins in comfort. No more, as in the past, do tourists need to travel from Damascus to faraway renowned historic sites.

For the future, there are plans to develop a series of tourist complexes. One of the most ambitious projects is the $40 million Amrit development

project on the Syrian coast four miles south of the ancient city of Tartous. It will be one of the largest resorts on the Mediterranean. A Finnish firm is expected to complete the design for the 2,000 bed project by early 1992 and the resort is stated to open for business in 1994.

Many other touristic projects are already in progress; others are in the planning stage. Money for future developments comes from increased oil revenues and investments from the Gulf countries. A number of ambitious Syrian entrepreneurs are in the thick of action, paving the way for bringing a deluge of tourists to the country. Archaeological sites, religious monuments and numerous resorts, completed or under construction, are the country's hidden aces which are sure to draw the visitors in the coming years.

Yet, there is a great deal to be done before Syria can match the facilities of leading tourist countries like Italy and Spain. Names of towns and cities throughout the country need to be indicated by highway signs. Rubbish disposal is not well organized and plastic bags, which appear like crops growing along the sides of major roads, should be cleaned up. Above all, the country is in dire need of second and third class hotels with reasonable rates. Even though everything else from clothing and food to travel are very reasonable in price, hotel rates are unreasonably high. Foreigners must pay hotel bills in US dollars. Five star luxury hotels cost on the average $200, four star $110, third class $75, and budget abodes $30.

The authorities are aware of the problem. Isaam al-Amiri, Deputy Minister of Tourism told me: 'I am sure that when people in the western countries become acquainted with what Syria has to offer and begin to come in ever increasing numbers, the market will set hotel prices. We are fast learning the intricacy of tourism'.

The heroic efforts of turning Syria into a modern land waiting for the tourists have not been easy. However, in the over 21 years Hafez al-Assad has been in power, the establishment of a secular self-sufficient 20th century state by a mixture of nationalism, socialism, family ties and a somewhat corrupt form of capitalism, has almost been achieved. Realistic, proud and tough, Assad has, at times, been ruthless in forcing his opponents to submit. Yet his policies have brought Syria from the backwaters of the Third World to the threshold of the First.

The cost of building this new Syria has been heavy. The price has been curtailment of freedom and a fair amount of nepotism. This, and Assad's attempt to create a secular state has caused many Syrians to oppose his policies. Yet, few will deny the fact that without his authoritarian form of rule, Syria could not have become what it is today — a country moving under its own steam into the 21st century.

# STRANGE ENCOUNTER

## by H. P. Rickman

RIGHT at the beginning of *The World the Text and the Critic* (1983) its author Edward W. Said describes an encounter between himself and a friend who is an official in the Department of Defence. Their conversation is intended to illustrate points about the relations between literature and politics, an interest natural to Said who is a Professor of Literature at Columbia University and a highly considered literary theorist as well as a committed supporter of a political cause. Born in Jerusalem (1935) he actively supports the aspirations of the Palestinians having been a member of the Palestine National Council and advisor of the PLO in their approaches to the USA government. He has written on *The Question of Palestine* (1979) and discussed it on television.

Said's account merits attention because it is so bizarre. He describes the interlocutors as blithely talking past each other with little idea of what the other is saying and then attributes to the conversation a significance which remains obscure because the conclusions he draws from this encounter receive little warrant from what has been said.

Am I making too much of a chatty little anecdote? Well it stuck in my mind — and in my gullet — because in its obscure way it points to the concerns and methods of arguing of a critic who is often, and respectfully, quoted. Here, only slightly abbreviated by paraphrase, is the story.

Said gives as the reason for talking to a friend in the Department of Defence that 'he was naively trying to understand the kind of person who could' order bombings of Vietnam. His friend said, 'You know the Secretary is a complex human being: he does not fit the picture you may have formed of the cold-blooded imperialist murderer. The last time I was in his office I noticed Durrell's *Alexandria Quartets* on his desk'.

This everyday tale of a 'naive' question receiving an irrelevant answer would hardly be worth analyzing if Said had not highlighted it by putting it at the beginning of his book (page 2) and built on its slender basis a mountain of portentous conclusions about literature, 'culture' and morality.

It is fairly clear to start with that Said's question is morally slanted. He is not asking for a psychological account of the kind of person equipped to be a member of the government and to carry out its policy. He is really asking, 'What kind of moral monster could do such terrible things'. When he claims to ask this 'naively' he is speaking, presumably, ironically. I don't think he is admitting not understanding the wider context when asking his simple human question. He is rather suggesting that the world shrugs off as naive fundamental questions about morality.

Once we see the question as a moral one, we also recognise that it rests on a number of assumptions, accepted by the government official but never spelled out let alone argued and defended.

Both take it for granted that the war and America's bombing policy

was morally wrong. This may well be right but can we simply take it for granted? Two questions need considering in a critical inquiry: can any war be morally justified as just? And could that war be possibly described in this way?

Next, among the things Said and his interlocutor agree on is that 'ordering' means being responsible for initiating the actions in question. If the Secretary was merely executing a decision made by the President, by Congress, or whoever, this would not relieve him of moral responsibility, but it would alter the parameters. The question, 'What kind of person would put the duty of his office above his humanitarian convictions?' sounds a different question from the one posed.

There is also the question of the morality of the extending of military action to civilians, which arises in virtually all bombing whether it was that of London, Berlin, Dresden, before we got to Vietnam.

The defence official indicates his agreement on the above points when he interprets Said's question as implying the idea that the Secretary is a murderer and does not defend him against this charge. He only argued against his being 'cold-blooded' about it.

No evidence or argument is offered for or against the Secretary acting cold-bloodedly. For all we know, for all we are told, he might have been passionately dedicated to 'killing communists' or he may have been agonizing in sleepless nights about the human consequences of his decisions. Said does not demur at this interpretation but only, understandably, at the official's suggestion that the Secretary being more complex than might have been thought was evidence of his not being a cold-blooded murderer.

For a moment it appears as if the official had misinterpreted Said's question as a purely psychological one rather than one about morality. If we ask 'What kind of person is X?' it is perfectly proper and to the point to reply, 'He is more complex than you think'. It is also perfectly proper and, I think, non-controversial that a politician who reads 'serious' literature is more complex than one who does not (or for that matter a novelist with no interest in politics).

There is, of course, no logical connection (and no argument to this effect offered in the text) between being complex — with special reference to being sensitive to literature — and being more or less moral. Indeed there is much factual evidence speaking against it. Said, in a footnote, places an even more clear-cut case beside that of the novel-reading Secretary. He refers to a concentration camp killer who read Rilke. Here the monstrosity of the actions are very widely agreed on and the question of the supposed duty to obey unthinking versus conscience well rehearsed.

So we know that a person can be a perceptive reader of good literature, may even be a good writer and yet perform evil actions. Both Said and his friend would no doubt have thoroughly disapproved of Frederick II of Prussia for his unscrupulous foreign policy. Yet Frederick wrote poetry, composed for the flute and keenly conversed with philosophers.

So if, as it seems, Said's friend, had intended to justify, or at least offer extenuating circumstances for, the Secretary's actions by referring to

his literary taste he was stupid or ignorant. After all it is even arguable that sophistication aggravates criminal acts. Such a man ought to have known better. It is, however, not too hard to see the reason why literary theorists would like there to be a link. The full appreciation of literature requires imagination and sensitivity. Should this not help us to bring more imagination and sensitivity to our human relations and thus make us better people? Alas, this does not seem to be invariably so.

So far I have just analyzed those two lines of conversation. On the surface Said quite straightforwardly asks, 'What is he like?' and his friend replies, 'More complex than you think'. However it is also pretty clear that a moral issue is being raised though very obliquely because both interlocutors agree on and take for granted the same valuations. The official only suggests — absurdly — that the act may be less culpable because the actor reads serious novels. If I have gone on about this less than scintillating episode, it is because the puzzle is why we are told it.

Said's conclusions are concentrated in two sentences both obscure as to what they mean and how they follow from Said's little episode. They need analyzing. In the first one he claims that it shows, 'the degree to which the cultural realm and its expertise are institutionally divorced from the real connections with power'. Culture means, no doubt, music, painting, ballet and literature and the expertise to be found there are such things as composing, appreciating art, interpreting text etc. The organisations embodying this culture and its expertise are theatres, art galleries, opera companies, libraries and universities. By power he presumably means the right and capacity to make or influence decisions vital for the life of society, possessed specifically by government but to some extent also by economic organisations and the media. It would be pedantic to ask him to specify the degree to which the divorce has taken place. He clearly thinks to a high degree, so what does the divorce between these two spheres mean? Presumably that the two are so organised that it is not easy for government to subsidise art, be the patron commissioning poems, encouraging music etc. Above all it might mean university professors and scholars not being consulted systematically (on an *ad hoc* basis they are sometimes consulted at present). If this is what divorce means we could all be sympathetic towards remarriage. That governments should support the arts, that real artists should have a say in town planning or the design of government buildings, that philosophers and literary critics should help draft legislation or scrutinise treaties we could greatly welcome. May be even in the present set-up, presidents, prime ministers, and other political leaders sometimes draw inspiration from poetry — they certainly claim they do by quotations inserted in their speeches. Professors, playwrights and the like sometimes attain high office — Czecho-Slovakia has a playwright as president at this very moment — and many more are consulted. But all this is certainly not institutionally retrenched. Said is obviously right there but what has this to do with the preceding anecdote. If it suggests anything it is that involvement in culture may have no moral significance, that readers of good literature — and I suspect writers of

it, and academic commentators — may yet be morally depraved. So why should culture be institutionally linked to power? In any case what would be the alternative to the kind of institutional arrangements prevailing in the USA or Great Britain? Mandatory places for literature professors in the government? Abandonment of a one-man one-vote system in favour of a corporate system in which cultural institutions have entrenched voting rights, or the right to vote is linked to cultural accomplishments? Such proposals are more than dubious and Said's anecdote is hardly enough to precipitate us into such drastic changes.

In a second sentence, meaning to expatiate on the first, Said asserts that it is typical that 'humanists and intellectuals accept the idea that you can read classy fiction as well as kill and maim because the cultural world is available for that particular sort of camouflaging, and because cultural types are not supposed to interfere in matters for which the social system has not certified them'.

This is even more puzzling and requires step by step analysis. If 'can' in the first half of the sentence means 'capable of' then not only humanists and intellectuals but anybody with a grain of experience of the world must accept as a plain fact that it is possible for well-read cultured people to be murderers and criminals. If 'can' means 'entitled to' it would be hard to find anyone, intellectual, humanist in fact any human being outside lunatic asylums, who think that reading classy novels is a licence to kill. Certainly Said's friend did not suggest anything of the kind.

The second half of the sentence seems to suggest that the 'can' might mean 'can get away with' i.e. you can get away with murder if you can make cultural claims. So far we have been given no evidence that culture camouflages anything. If the events of the Vietnam war, the occurrences in concentration camps have been hidden, disguised, denied or justified, I don't think classy books played a prominent part. Political speeches, press conferences, newspaper articles and even histories are more likely candidates. I think Said has dug his own pit to fall into. Having given no reasons why he thinks that the Secretary might be a murderer, he has heard no arguments against it only the morally irrelevant comment that the Secretary was a complex character because he read classy fiction.

The last part of the quotation, supposedly giving a further reason for that licence to kill, represents another complete jump for which we have not been prepared. Where has it been suggested, let alone demonstrated that anyone thinks that cultural types should not interfere in certain things. Indeed the notion of being 'certified' is thoroughly obscure. If anyone is certified by the social system, which I take to mean 'constitutionally entitled', to deal with such matters as war and its conduct, it is the President and the Congress of the USA elected by the citizens of the country. They and those they appoint in accordance with their authority, are the only ones 'certified' to make such decisions. The rest of us, intellectuals and non-intellectuals alike are not so certified. Neither university professors nor plumbers are entitled to declare war or make peace, order or cancel bombing missions. However we are all given the consti-

tutional right to interfere, in the sense of speaking our minds, writing articles or books, organising meetings or protest marches, submitting petitions or taking officials who have exceeded their authority to court. Who says that cultural types are not supposed to do any of these things? Nothing in Said's preceding text, least of all the words quoted, give us a hint.

Do I make too much of a few sentences? Should I take the whole book or all of Said's work into consideration before judging these few lines to be incoherent nonsence? All I can say — and I think it is consistent with the view of much of our literary theory — I feel entitled to being able to understand — to some extent at least the very beginning of a book. That the Secretary's action is murder is not questioned. I would suspect that the Secretary himself, and the government which initiated or supported his actions would have denied that, claiming that the war was just etc. ... If we are to judge the Secretary those are the issues we would have to decide on for no-one in his senses would exculpate anyone already judged to be a murderer because he is a complex person. If Said's friend suggests that, on the evidence of his reading, the Secretary is an unexpectedly complex being, it might possibly show that he is less 'cold-blooded' than suspected though of course, it does not follow because a person can be cold-blooded in one sphere and not so in another. In any case does it matter a lot whether a murderer is cold-blooded or not, and if it does, which is morally better?

I suspect that the official tried to arouse some human sympathy, a sense of fellow-feeling with the Secretary whom he cannot defend on moral grounds. This is a common procedure and has little to do with the form it takes in this case. Here it is the Secretary's reading. But we have heard in a similar spirit, that Hitler loved animals, that Himmler was a good husband, that sadistic killers were affectionate sons. We are reminded of our common humanity with the most evil of men. I personally share the concentration camp killers' taste for Rilke (and I hope little else). All this is a plea for a little charity in our judgements of a person, and this is what Said's friend must have intended, if he was not just talking irrelevant nonsense. But none of this can affect the judgement of the act. For this only two factors are relevant: the nature of the act, and the person's degree of personal responsibility for it. This is surely understood across barriers of social systems, social class membership and the like.

On the official's modest plea for human sympathy in the case of someone he apparently accepts to be a murderer, Said seems to build a mountain of theory. He makes basically two claims: one, that culture is used to camouflage the misdeeds of our society and two, that culture is institutionally divorced from power. I can see no connection between either of them and the preceding anecdote, nor can I see a link between them.

It is well understood that there are links and continuities between the different phenomena of a civilization. If, let us say, the economy of a country is based on a free market, the law protects private property and the constitution prescribes universal adult suffrage, then these values are

quite likely to be reflected in, and even strengthened by, much of literature, and indeed culture, in general. If an economic free for all is highly valued it may also be celebrated in literature.

But this is not invariably so except under authoritarian regimes. In Hitler's Germany or in the USSR before glasnost, or in Iran — to give just a few outstanding examples — strict censorship and severe penalties for dissent assure that culture is in tune with, or even glorifies and justifies prevailing policy. In countries with no, or minimal, censorship, there are also some forces at work to encourage conformity with prevalent tendencies. For example, before a book is published or a play put on television, it needs to be approved by a publisher's reader or producer. It may well be in a country like Great Britain, the publisher's readers, or TV producers come from a fairly uniform background, sharing university degrees from a small selection of universities and being of the same generation having reached the same point in their careers. Some screening of culture may result (to establish if and how far this is true would be a matter of sociological research) but it can only be patchy. For one thing there is a plurality of such power sources. For example, the young intellectual of the book trade may tend to be left wing even though the government may not be. In any case works attacking and undermining the existing political order and the prevailing moral standard do come out and may become influential.

But we have not been talking about the links between culture and society in this case. The suggestion that the Vietnamese bombing is murder is not denied, or camouflaged. There is no suggestion that the Secretary was deluded about what he was doing, or thought it right because he was reading Durrell. It seems absurd to assume that in any society something is simultaneously labelled as criminal and camouflaged by art. That in most modern societies the cultural realm is divorced from the real connection with power may well be true. I have already suggested that I find it difficult to imagine the alternative in Said's mind. As a writer I would certainly like to influence power i.e. affect the decisions made within my society. But I can envisage only two factors which could contribute to this: that I should write well and eloquently and that the educational system is such that our institutional decision-makers should be open to arguments well-presented, but I cannot see a reasonable way by which my influence could be 'institutionalised'.

In any case Said's first conclusion seems to contradict the second. If the dubious uses of power are, and can be, camouflaged by culture, then there is indeed a case for culture not being given institutional recognition. In Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia, governments actively guided architecture, painting and drama to fit the ideology of these states. Artists, writers and critics who reflected and supported these trends were given official status and high privileges. That is not the system most of us want. We are grateful for art being left alone and not involved in the power structure. Surely, Professor Said feels similarly.

If I have written at length, and with some heat, about Said's anecdote,

the reason is simple and it is one with which Said should sympathise. I should like culture and the contribution of intellectuals, i.e. writers, critics and academics, to count in the shaping of the human world, but if we are to be taken seriously we need to fulfil three conditions which all relate to the expertise we are supposed to possess. We need to write clearly and eloquently, reason cogently and provide carefully ascertained evidence for our assertions.

Said's text raises three issues of great importance. The first concerns morality: What is right? What is a person's responsibility? On what grounds can he be justified or condemned, or allowed extenuating circumstances? None of this is openly discussed: instead implied moral judgements are taken for granted as premises of what follows.

The second issue concerns the role culture can and should play in human life. To what extent can it humanise us and make us more sensitive and imaginative and to what extent can it serve as escape and excuse? This is a matter for psychological and sociological research, but also a matter of human choices individually made by artists and their audience, and collectively by the kind of educational system we create and support.

The last point I made leads me to the third issue which is the relation between culture and power, between cultural institutions and government. Partly this is a matter of sociological investigation of what is going on, how the system operates etc., but partly of political will. Clearly, we would all like to be taken more notice of. But, frankly, I do not know what institutional arrangements would serve to bring power and culture closer together and if any such arrangements would be morally acceptable; I don't think Said does either in spite of the portentous hints to the contrary.

I suppose the best that can be said for Professor Said's anecdote is that it provokes thought and discussion.

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# SCOTTISH WITCHCRAFT: MYTH OR REALITY?

**by Hugh McLachlan and J. K. Swales**

FROM time to time, allegations are made about contemporary satanic and sexual rituals. This is especially interesting in relation to Scotland, since it has traditionally, and probably rightly, been assumed that suspected witches were particularly prevalent here and pursued with exceptional vigour and cruelty, especially in the last decade of the sixteenth century and in the first three-quarters of the following one. It might be interesting to ask whether the authorities then were reacting to a real or imagined threat. Did witches really exist? Did witchcraft actually occur?

Central to the accusation of witchcraft in Scotland was the notion that those accused had entered into a compact with the devil, who appeared to them in the form of a man. They were thought to renounce Christ and their Christian baptism to him, to have sexual intercourse with him and to receive supernatural power from him. They were also thought to worship the devil at meetings held with him and other witches. In Europe, these meetings were called 'sabbaths', although, in Scotland, they do not seem to have been given a particular name nor, in Scotland, were they thought of as usually being sexual orgies.

**The evidence for the existence of witchcraft**

What evidence is there that witches actually existed in Scotland? Alternatively, what sort of evidence was cited in witchcraft trials? Three categories of evidence seem to have been quoted. There was the evidence of the devil's mark, the evidence of witnesses and the evidence of confessions.

The devil was thought to lay a secret bodily mark on witches on the renunciation of their baptism. Professional witch prickers such as Paterson (who was eventually discovered to be a woman dressed as a man), Christian Caddel and, most famous of all, John Kincaid, were employed to find this mark; suspected witches had all their bodily hair removed to facilitate the discovery. Large pins were stuck into various parts of the suspect's body in an attempt to find a part which did not bleed and was insensible to pain. The suspect would be blindfolded and asked to say in which part of her body the pin had been placed; if she was unable to do so, it was deemed that the devil's mark had been discovered. It was often claimed to have been discovered on the left-hand side of the back. This evidence was frequently, although not invariably, used in Scottish trials.

In the then popular imagination, witches were also assumed to possess other objective features, but reference to them was not made, or not commonly made, in actual trials. For instance, it was sometimes maintained that witches emitted a particular smell and also that certain people were able to detect witches by the appearance of their eyes. Witches were also thought to be unable to shed tears or to say the Lord's Prayer. The idea that witches could not float in water — which they had indirectly renounced through the renunciation of their baptism — and of a 'swim-

test' to detect witches did not gain currency in Scotland.

Witnesses in witchcraft cases were almost always supposed victims of witchcraft or spokesmen for supposed victims or else supposed accomplices of suspected witches. It is rare for there to be what we would consider as an independent witness. Much of the evidence is totally unreliable, as when an accused person is said to have been seen talking to a cat which was not really a cat but the devil appearing in the form of a cat. Much of it is purely circumstantial where some motive for or veiled threats of witchcraft is imputed. For example, when Helen Symen was accused of witchcraft in Aberdeen in 1671, it was addressed to her that she had:

> ... conceived a cruel malice against Alexander Blackhall for taking of your house ... you out of hatred and revenge menaced and threatened that he should not long enjoy it ... And shortly thereafter you came to him wishing him welcome home and laid your hand and touched him on the shoulder and immediately by your devilish sorcery and witchcraft the power and strength of his shoulder was taken away and he fell sick and shortly thereafter deceased. And being dead, his shoulder which you by your sorcery touched was found blue and bruised and corrupted in a very noisome manner.[1]

In other cases, there is hard evidence that suspected witches either thought of themselves as being in possession of supernatural power or purported to be in possession of such power. It was used in evidence against Margaret Alexander, who was charged with witchcraft in Glasgow in 1700, that she had threatened Robert Patersone that he would regret not having given her a shilling. When his horse lost the power of its hind legs the very next day, Margaret told Robert that, if he bought two shillings' worth of salt and administered it to his horse in a particular way, his horse would recover. It seems clear from this and from other evidence that Margaret tried to cast spells or, at least, to give the impression that she was able successfully to cast spells. Within twenty days, the horse died.[2]

The evidence which is perhaps *prima facie* the most convincing is the confessions of suspected witches. Many people actually confessed to being witches, to casting spells upon their neighbours and to worshipping the devil at meetings with other witches. In a typical confession in Scotland, a woman would say that she met a man dressed all in black or sometimes one dressed all in red, or all in green. Somehow she knew that he was actually the devil, although it was never made clear how one was supposed to distinguish between someone dressed all in black and someone similarly clad who was also the devil. Such meetings were usually said to occur out of doors when the woman was alone and out of sight of witnesses; occasionally they took place in the woman's own home, as in the case of Manie Halieburton who was burned as a witch in 1649. She confessed that '... in came the devil and lay with her (she being yet in bed) and had carnal copulation with her, his nature being cold. He desired her to renounce Christ and her baptism and become his servant which she did ...'[3]

Typically, in such sexual encounters, the devil was said to be cold. This would seem to be related to King James VI's (James I of England) supposition in his *Daemonology* that, when the devil appeared to a witch in the form of a man, he occupied the body of a recently deceased person.

Acceptance of this supposition might well have led contemporaries to answer in the negative the intriguing, inevitable and frightening question: 'Can sex with the devil produce pregnancy?'

The devil promised his new servant worldly success as in the case of Issobel Broun. She confessed that:

> Again she met with him at the same place and (he) offered her money and promised that she and her bairns should never want. A third time she met him at the same place where the devil prevailed so much with her that upon his desire she renounced her baptism and he took her hand and laid it upon her head and caused her give over all betwixt the hand and the earth to him...[4]

This was the standard formal procedure for becoming the devil's servant, according to the confessions. The devil was often said to give his servants a new name, and, incidentally, 'Janet' seems to have been a very popular diabolical name in Scotland.

Often, although by no means invariably, people confessed to attending meetings with the devil and other witches who were often named. For example, we read in Agnes Hunter's confession:

> The fourth time she met with him, i.e., the devil, at Longniddry conforme to the former appointment there was with her Marion Richeson, Majorie Adamson, Margaret Russell, Margaret Richeson, Margaret Staig and another long high woman that she does know... they met in Thomas Dickson's house... there was meat and drink provided for them, which they ate and drank they had one quart of wine, they stayed about an hour and a half and the devil promised them their reward at Pasche.[5]

**The interpretation of the evidence of witchcraft**

How should we interpret this evidence? We do not want to address the question of whether there were 'witches' in the sense of people who actually did meet the devil in the form of a man and became his servant. Nonetheless, it is interesting to ask whether there was any reality at all behind the witchcraft accusations.

It would seem to be uncontroversial to say that there were people who tried to harness diabolical supernatural powers and people who thought that they did have access to such powers. There were also those 'abusers of the people', as they were called, who purported to have such powers. It would seem to be equally uncontroversial to say that many people who were burned as witches were totally innocent in the sense that they did not try to help or harm people by devilish supernatural means nor pretend to be able to do so. What is controversial and, from our historical vantage point at least, unknowable is the proportion of accused witches who belonged to either category. The central area of controversy regarding the reality of Scottish witchcraft concerns whether or not those who were accused of being witches were members of any sort of organised cult or any sort of secret society. Were there 'witches" meetings of any sort? Two approaches have been taken in trying to answer this question.

Some have argued that there was a reality *of some sort* behind the theory of the witches' sabbaths. Others have argued that the theory was a complete fantasy.

The first approach is taken by Murray.[6] According to her, fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth century witches, or supposed witches, were adherents of a pre-Christian fertility cult. It centred on the worship of

Janus or Dianus, a two-faced god who represented the cycle of the crops and the seasons. Certain actual persons represented him at their meetings and, according to Murray, this person was mistakenly thought to be the devil by those hostile to the cult. Those present were also thought by them to kiss his backside, but in reality, Murray argues, he wore a mask which, like Janus, had two faces. Members of the cult were rigorously disciplined, apparently reflecting the theory that witches were whipped for not attending meetings with the devil and performing insufficient *maleficia*. The cult is held by her to have been formed on the basis of local 'covens' consisting of thirteen members who attended weekly secret meetings called, by her, 'esbats'. In this account, there was some sort of organised non-Christian cult against which the authorities were reacting; actual events produced and partly supported the contemporary theory of witchcraft even though the theory presented a distorted picture of what actually happened.

The other approach to the evidence has been taken by Cohn.[7] He argues that there were no organised witches' meetings of any kind and that it was, rather, the *theory* of the witches' sabbath which produced accusations and confessions of having attended such meetings; but the theory was totally without foundation:

> The great witch hunt can in fact be taken as a supreme example of a massive killing of innocent people by a bureaucracy acting in accordance with beliefs which, unknown or rejected in earlier centuries, had come to be taken for granted, as self-evident truths. It illustrates vividly both the power of the human imagination to build up a stereotype and its reluctance to question the validity of a stereotype once it is generally accepted.[8]

He explains accusations of and convictions for witchcraft in terms of the psychology and beliefs of those who persecuted supposed witches, rather than in terms of any actions of such persecuted people. It would appear in this account that the distinction previously made between the prevalent theory of witchcraft and actual confessions of suspected witches is somewhat artificial; confessing suspected witches were merely reiterating the accepted theory and hence, as we find in the Scottish cases, such confessions were extremely standardized.

Cohn argues against Murray that confessions of suspected witches do *not* give us good reason to believe that meetings of any sort took place since, although they include plausible accounts of meals and dancing and drinking, they also include quite fantastic features. For example, he quotes from the confession of Issobel Gowdie from Auldern who appears to have been executed around 1662. After being given a fairly plausible account of a meal, we are told that:

> All the coven did fly like cats, jackdaws, hares and rooks, etc., but Barbara Ronald, in Brightmanney, and I always rode on a horse, which we would make of a straw, or a bean-stalk. Bessie Wilson was always in the likeness of a rook . . . (The devil) would be like a heifer, a bull, a deer, a roe, or a dog, etc., and have dealings with us; and he would hold up his tail while we kissed his arse.[9]

Cohn maintains that '. . . where a source contains untrustworthy or demonstrably false statements it should be treated with scepticism throughout . . .'.[10] He continues: 'Stories which have manifestly impossible features are not to be trusted in any particular, as evidence of what physically happened'.[11]

If witches' meetings did not take place why did people say that they attended them? This can be readily explained. Torture and the threat of torture were central to Scottish witchcraft cases. Its use was legal in Scotland although not in England, where in practice it also occurred. It was used on the absurd assumption that people could be expected to tell the truth under torture. This assumption was made explicitly in a commission from James VI for the discovery of witches. Certain people were empowered to try people for witchcraft and '... the persons wilful or refusing to declare the verity to put to torture, or such other punishment to use and cause be used as may move them to utter the truth ...'.[12] In practice this meant that people who did not confess to being witches were to be tortured until they did. It is quite easy to reconstruct the possible derivation of the confessions: the torturers knew what they wanted the suspects to say and they similarly were familiar with the story whose telling would bring them a merciful release in strangulation and death. There are countless cases where confessing witches affirm that they confessed merely to avoid further torture. A notable case is that of Alesoun Balfour from Orkney who was burned in 1594. Not only she, but her aged husband and two of her children, one a girl of seven years, were tortured (in her presence) in order to bring her to confess. When the torture ceased, she renounced her confession and, immediately before she was strangled, she declared that she was as innocent of the crime of witchcraft as a newborn baby.[13] Confessions of suspected witches are not reliable because of the general use of torture in their provocation.

**Conclusion**

There is certainly no convincing evidence that Murray's theory is correct. Apart from the confessions, there is no evidence in its support. Even the confessions tend to confute her specific theory, even if they were to suggest that meetings of some sort took place. For example, suspected witches confessed to many things but none appears to have confessed to being a member of a pre-Christian fertility cult. We do not hear of people, about to be strangled and burned as witches, renouncing or partly renouncing their confessions and declaring themselves worshippers of Janus. Supposed 'covens', as described by confessing witches, do not conform to Murray's account of them. There is no tendency for suspected witches to say that thirteen people were present at their meetings.

Should we do what Cohn appears to do and assert that there was no reality at all behind the theory of the witches' sabbath? Could we reasonably claim to know that there were no witches' meetings of any sort and no organised witch cult of any sort? This is a difficult question to answer. Cohn is certainly correct when he says that we should be sceptical towards the confessions of having attended witches' gatherings, but to be sceptical is not to say that such meetings definitely did not take place; it is to say that we do not know whether they took place or not.

There is no available reliable evidence to suggest that in Scotland there were any sort of organised witches' gatherings although the lack of such evidence in itself does not prove that they did not take place. After a

Scottish fashion, this particular question concerning Scottish witchcraft is perhaps most appropriately answered with a response of 'not proven'. It is ironic to think that modern-day Scottish 'witches' of whom, perhaps, there are some, might well be trying to reproduce via their covens ancient meetings which never took place.

What, if any, direct parallels are between these ancient cases and more recent ones would be difficult or impossible to ascertain. Nonetheless, perhaps lessons can be learned and warnings wrung from them. For instance, confessions should always be regarded cautiously, especially when they are not confirmed by any other evidence, even when confessions cohere with a series of other confessions. Again, witnesses (and not merely defendants) can produce testimony whose source lies in the imagination of their interrogators as well as, or rather, in their own direct experiences. If the recent Orkney allegations of ritual sexual abuse spring to mind, then they need not do so particularly; nor should they do so exclusively: this is a timeless possibility.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Scottish Record Office Manuscript: JC26/38.
2. Scottish Record Office Manuscript: JC26/81/09.
3. Register of the Privy Council, 2nd Series, Vol. 8, p.194.
4. Register of the Privy Council, 2nd Series, Vol. 8, p.195.
5. Register of the Privy Council, 2nd Series, Vol. 8, p.191.
6. M. Murray. *The Witch-cult in Western Europe.* Oxford, 1962.
7. N. Cohn. *Europe's Inner Demons.* Chatto-Heinemann, 1975.
8. N. Cohn. *Europe's Inner Demons.* Chatto-Heinemann, 1975, p.255.
9. N. Cohn. *Europe's Inner Demons.* Chatto-Heinemann, 1975, p.113.
10. Register of the Privy Council. Vol. 4, p.52.
11. Register of the Privy Council. Vol. 4, p.115.
12. Register of the Privy Council. Vol. 4, p.680.
13. R. Pitcairn. *Ancient Criminal Trials in Scotland.* Edinburgh, 1853. Vol. 1, pp. 375-377.

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# PRE-HISTORY: THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

## by Anthony Harrigan

IN pondering the character of the world created by the peoples of pre-history, it is necessary to go beyond the material finds and methods of traditional archaeology. The excavation, classification and dating of materials uncovered have yielded an immense body of knowledge about peoples in pre-historic times. Late 20th century techniques, including radiocarbon dating and pollen analysis, have augmented our store of knowledge about the distant past. But there is a question as to how much more can be learned from the uncovering of ancient hearths or the description of cist burials. A good case can be made for greater emphasis on cognitive archaeology, that is, for the study of the internal landscape of the pre-historic mind. We need to comprehend better the values, aims, fears, communal ties, relationships and perceptions of pre-historic peoples.

Many people apparently believe that answers to such questions are beyond the scope of archaeological investigation. They conclude that it is impossible to discover the meaning that pre-historic builders ascribed to motifs carved on stone structures 4,500 years ago. Thus they implicitly accept the existence of a dead end in the study of pre-history. Happily, it is possible to work back from a thoroughly excavated structure to a vision of how its construction was implemented. This intellectual enterprise is speculative, of course and cannot be proven in a scientific sense. Yet this speculative approach is as convincing as an art historian's account of how a renaissance masterwork of painting was executed.

Much archaeological speculation is based on material evidence that contains hints of things unseen. But at some point speculation has to extend beyond that which has a strong material foundation. In order to penetrate the secrets of the past, we need to use all the information flowing to our brains, which provides leads to us — all the intuition that is such a vital part of our ability to understand any subject. The part that brain-storming can play in getting to previously undiscovered truth is substantial as people involved in many fields have come to realize.

Peter Macdonald, author of *Minutes of Time*, observes: 'Even the most intelligent individual uses only a very small proportion of the (brain) cells available'. This is a reminder that a single disciplinary approach may be too narrow.

William Booth, science editor of *The Washington Post*, makes the point that 'Paleontologists have traditionally tried to understand the past by looking at bones and stones. Like Hamlet, they ponder the skulls of poor dead Yorick. They rummage through early tool kits and try to figure out what the sharp stones were used for'. That is all fine and good, he argues, but, increasingly, students of pre-history have to develop more wide-ranging visions.

The late Prof. Michael J. O'Kelly, who excavated the Neolithic New-grange monument from 1962 to 1975, engaged in such an enterprise in

creating an imaginative picture of the construction of Newgrange. He envisioned the work force as being divided into six gangs, each carrying out a particular task — from locating the 450 large slabs used in the monument to carvers who applied the symbolic ornamentation. Calculations show that the covering cairn contains 200,000 tons of stones, but no one knows with certainty how the stones were moved, who conceived the project or who decided on the repertoire of symbols on the huge stones. A speculative approach is necessary for a more complete understanding. Prof. O'Kelly did not hesitate to ask the ultimate questions in the minds of students of Newgrange: 'Who was the overall man responsible for this vast undertaking? Was he king, king-god, priest, or merely the then version of our modern tycoon?' At this time we lack clear answers. But the way to answers lies through asking questions of ourselves with respect to the manner in which humans have worked down through the ages. We have to consider closely what we know about human perception and the internal landscape of the human mind. We know, first of all, that an idea or conception, religious, social, architectural or otherwise, begins in the mind of the individual. A vast company of people was needed to build Newgrange, but one man gave birth to the idea of the structure and conceived a method whereby it could be built.

To be sure, we need to be on guard against assuming that another society in another time resembles our own. We need to appreciate the strangeness of other societies and recognize that the patterns of thought and the texture of life four or five thousand years ago were enormously different from our own. The mind of modern people is like an attic filled with furniture inherited from many generations of a family. Therefore our thinking is shaped by the ideas, institutions and customs developed over millennia. To understand the human mind in pre-history, specifically the 3000 B.C. period in which Newgrange was built, we have to realize that people then weren't carrying the modern load of memory. We must endeavour to think with their minds and see with their eyes, if that is possible. We have to imagine what they saw and thought when they looked out at the world around them.

We do not know exactly how Neolithic men and women in 3000 B.C. felt about time. We can be sure, however, that they were conscious of time because they lived very close to nature — much closer than late 20th century urban people can readily understand. Their lives were truly governed by the seasons and by the rhythms of nature. The periodicities of nature were always with them, always in their minds, and shaped their religious impulses and conditioned everything in their existence. They were keenly aware of the movement of the stars and planetary bodies. Cosmic events provided the temporal context of pre-historic peoples.

We can be sure that pre-historic peoples did not feel any of the urgency of time that is a ruling force in human existence in the modern world. The round of life was fixed in pre-history, but the passage of time did not produce pressures. The pre-historic world was a world without deadlines. It did not matter if tombs or stone circles were completed in five

or 50 years. The people of that epoch were not going anywhere; they were there. They undoubtedly sought to be in tune with the rhythms and periodicities of the world around them; they did not fight against time or attempt to overcome time. And even as they were not under pressure to complete a tomb or monument, they did not conceive of it as having utility for a special bloc of time but for ever.

We should ask ourselves what they saw when they looked out of their eyes at the world round them. They saw a world of nature and of nature's rhythms — the movement of animals, the regular pattern of the seasons, few people and even fewer human constructions. They saw a world without significant change. It also was a world without population pressure or the pressure that comes from unexpected change. It was a world without surprises or the fear of surprise. The remains of the stone constructions of the period also suggest that it was a world without significant conflict. The Neolithic age wasn't an age of armed struggle. The idea of territoriality existed but there wasn't pressure to trespass on the territories of other small groups in a largely empty landscape.

These conditions of existence had an immense impact on their relationships, one to another. The level of hostility had to be very low. The absence of intra-community and inter-community hostility had to mean that the spirit of co-operation was very strong. Competition as known in the modern world must have been almost non-existent. In recorded history, much of the strife has been the product of competition and the hostility it breeds. Hostility also is derived from a shortage of food. Monuments such as Newgrange, Stonehenge, Avebury — all suggest that the builders had substantial reserves of food, that it was not necessary for all members of a community to work all the time for sustenance. Clearly, there was more than a sufficiency that made it possible to build tombs or ritual centres that required prodigious numbers of man-hours over a period of many years. The sufficiency also made possible development of specialists such as the carvers who created the cups, circles, lozenges and other symbols of the great surviving pre-historic structures.

The most intriguing question with respect to pre-historic peoples concerns the extent to which they were analytical in the modern sense. The management of their own and others' labour in the construction of great communal projects attests to their organizational capacity and ability to plan over time. This implies a succession of planners who maintained continuity of vision and dedication. One wonders how such planners came to be in a society whose remains provide no solid evidence of a hierarchial structure, though the bodies placed in major tombs must have been those of special people. We do not know, however, in what sense they were special. Prof. O'Kelly expresses great admiration for the people who planned and executed Newgrange and other ancient monuments in Ireland. He says that, in studying the building methods employed in the construction of Newgrange, 'we came to realize that we were not dealing with questions of brute force and mere strength of numbers so much as with intelligence and well-organized methods more on the lines of the organiza-

tion and division of labour practised today in any comparable undertaking'. He reinforces this conviction, asserting that 'the master-builder-cum-architect, and the foreman of his various work gangs, were intelligent and experienced and well-able to direct and supervise the tasks that they had set themselves'. Clearly, they were people capable of precise measurements, as evidenced by the exactness of the orientation of the tombs as well as such complicated a building technique as corbelling.

This and so much else testifies to the powerful intelligence of leading individuals in pre-historic times. One cannot know, however, in what manner the analytical, engineering and management understanding of the master builders was or could be shared within a small community or between communities. Was the difficulty of communicating and recording the cause for the slowness of advance over the Neolithic centuries? Was it that sheer intelligence cannot effect change in a community that lacks a large frame of thinking? Has not the lack of large frames been the arresting factor in recorded history down to our own time? The ancient Greeks knew about steam and made a toy that depended upon it, but there was not the conceptual frame for using it.

The idea of the mental block is helpful in considering what held back pre-historic peoples. It exists today in the primitive peoples of South America, New Guinea and elsewhere. In the contemporary world, we are very mindful of the force of gravity and conceive in some fashion the possibility of overcoming it. But we are no more prepared to overcome gravity than the ancients were ready to harness the power of steam. The modern mind, like the mind of pre-historic peoples, is highly developed in many respects but blocked off in others. Our mental block also may extend into understanding the past and putting two and two together with respect to the abilities of pre-historic peoples. Man's intellectual vision always seems to have blind spots.

For all the growing comprehension of the world that existed in Western Europe four or five thousand years ago, moderns continue to have a blind spot about that world. We have not put it into perspective and fail to fully appreciate its extraordinary accomplishments. Peter Macdonald, author of *Minutes of Time*, notes that 'several times in the last five thousand years small groups of human beings have suddenly shown tremendous collective energy, creativity and inventiveness'. Perhaps we should regard the 3000 B.C.-2000 B.C. period as one of those extraordinary periods.

Peter Levi, author of *The Flutes of Autumn* and a lifelong student of the pre-historic world, obviously believes this is the case, as indicated by his comments on Stonehenge: 'The most impressive monument I had ever seen, and the most thrilling landscape I could imagine ever seeing... the texture of the stones in that desert and their magnitude, the huge scale and lack of obvious purpose of the whole affair, the incoherence of its ruins... still make an impression. The monolithic pillars have a kind of harmony, like very heavy dancing. And yet no one knows exactly the purpose or the origin of Stonehenge... It stands there, infinitely enduring

with its shoulders hunched'. Clearly, Stonehenge represents a realm of invisible and unknown abstract concepts. We look at it and seek a privileged insight into a distant world. Stonehenge is context specific, and we have not yet grasped the context. We are moved, as Levi is, filled with awe at this triumph of the human spirit in pre-history. We discern intuitively, that it has to do with the age-old desire to understand the cosmos and find the place of human beings in the order of things.

As we consider the peoples of pre-history, it is important not to be condescending. People capable of constructing Stonehenge, Newgrange, Avebury and other great monuments cannot be regarded in that manner. One has to ask what monuments our modern consumer society will leave behind when it recedes into the mists of time. That question should have a chastening effect upon moderns. Awareness of contemporary societal shallowness should help us respect the peoples of pre-historic times — respect that is necessary if we are to establish a bond across 50 centuries. It is imperative that we not regard our contacts with Neolithic peoples as encounters with aliens. A relationship with the peoples of the pre-historic past has to involve thinking of them as we think of civilization at its best — truly human, that is, possessed of the light of humankind when it is burning at its brightest. This is the attitude we have — or should have — to the world of Greece and Rome. Certainly, the people who created Stonehenge and Newgrange had different intellectual horizons. They were not equipped with the tools to bend the material world to their uses, but they had purpose, unity, and communal ties that the modern world cannot begin to equal. And these qualities make up for all that they lacked in terms of technology. Moderns also have lost touch with the rhythms of nature as they have imposed artificial time requirements on their daily lives. Jeremy Rifkin, author of *Time Wars*, notes that: 'Time is the instrument that makes possible interaction and the creation of a culture'. Pre-historic peoples had the advantage of not regarding time as an adversary. They did not fight against time; they went with the flow, as evidenced by their building efforts over generations. Moderns cannot do this in the pressure cooker of their existence. The peoples of pre-history, then, were time-bonding creatures, which is a condition that moderns ought to admire.

It can be argued that by comprehending the peoples of pre-history and giving recognition to their achievements, we help make it possible to steal our way back into the past, to penetrate the mental universe of the remote past. Pre-history is tremendously important in itself, but it also is important for what it teaches us about our evolving self, about the qualities of the human mind and the nature of perception. Indeed that may be the ultimate benefit of cognitive archaeology. It should make us feel psychologically alive and aware of how the mind has developed. The mind, as distinct from the brain, is the product of the various brain functions. Dr. Wilder Penfield, the great neurosurgeon, described the mind as the transcendent functions not reducible to physiology. Dr. Oliver Sachs, another distinguished neurosurgeon, writing in *The New York Review of Books* (Nov.

22, 1990), observes that 'Faced with the necessity of survival, for making order in a teeming and chaotic world, the brain is highly plastic and adapts itself at each moment'. We should understand that in connection with the life and endeavours of the peoples of pre-history. At the dawn of civilization, they constructed not only an everyday world but also created great works that embodied their beliefs and aspirations regarding the cosmic order.

The full richness of any society is to be found not only in what it constructs in material terms — and the pre-historic material constructions truly have an enduring power to create awe in the most sophisticated minds, but in its inner vision. What we seek in the study of pre-history is a comprehension of the total being of Neolithic people. Why do people of the late 20th century regard the great monuments of pre-history with awe? Why are they moved by even smaller and less dramatic creations such as dolmen, hole stones and stone circles? In part, it must be the power of the unfathomable. It does not take any great feat of scholarly imagination for ordinary observers to realize that they are witnesses to an extraordinary human vision and spirit when they view megalithic monuments. The more they examine them and learn about their construction, the more observers marvel at the magnitude of the achievement of pre-historic people in planning and building such monuments. They realize that these monuments represent a great leap forward on the part of Neolithic people — a leap from a world of primitive shelter to edifices of great size and complexity. They are intrigued too by the fact that though we don't have the key to understanding the message of the stones, study by learned men and women may end with the unlocking of the secrets of these megaliths. The megalithic monuments are messages in stone — encoded meaning for future generations. The awe that our contemporaries feel in the presence of the monuments has been the emotion of beholders down through the centuries. It makes one think of the origin of this reaction. The megaliths undoubtedly were the first man-moulded objects to produce this reaction. Before they were cut, raised and assembled, an almost religious feeling of awe was produced only by certain natural features of earth such as hills and mountains that seemed to have a human shape. To be sure, superb cave art was created at a much earlier period but this wasn't building, the transformation of a landscape. Why people suddenly developed the impulse to build about five thousand years ago is a question that must receive the most intensive consideration in future. My own feeling is that it represents a manifestation of a sudden, albeit inexplicable, advance in the human mind. Again, I suggest the duality of mind and brain. Dr. Sachs explains Dr. Penfield's view that the mind is a ghostly thing. It transcends the physicality and functions of the various parts of the brain. All the physiological elements such as existed in Einstein's brain existed long before Neolithic times, but an Einstein did not appear until modern times. The mind — the transcendent reality above the physical brain — took a very long time to evolve; it is still evolving. And the megalithic world was one of the giant steps of evolution of mind. Thus the

great monuments are more than shelters for the dead. They exemplify the unfolding of the mental process and a form of communication. If this is correct, then the future study of pre-history has to be vitally concerned with the nature of the mental process. We have to understand that the evolution of the brain gave man the ability to recognize categories and solve problems. The neuronal wiring gave man the ability to create an elaborate language structure. But the evolution of the mind made possible the ethical values and ethical communities and the means of addressing the desire to communicate in the future. The brain gives us memory; the mind gives us the ability to assign significance to construction. If we see the megalithic world as the product of the unfolding of the mind at a particular time, we shall be less concerned than students of archaeology have been in the past about geographical sources of new developments in building. Population movements also will be less important than the evolution of the pre-historic mind.

Though scholars and laymen have puzzled over pre-historic rock markings for at least 150 years, the examinations have not produced a generally accepted theory of their meaning. Therefore, this is the area of megalithic studies that cries out for concentrated analysis. The markings represent the principal clues to the overall aims of this Neolithic culture. Computer studies of the markings should help archaeologists penetrate the unknown. Computers enable students to categorize the markings, laying out where particular markings are found, in what types of stone constructions, in connection with the orientation of tombs. A likely line of advance in these studies is one that establishes categories, re-categorizes them with more information, and then re-categorizes the markings. This is an enterprise in which students from many disciplines and fields of study — from art to cryptoanalysis — should have a place and where brainstorming may turn up significant new leads. As they are not mere ornamentation, there has to be a unifying principle in their use of monuments. All forms of communication have a grammar of their own — principles of communication. It is hard to believe that widespread, consistent use of the markings did not have a common pattern of meaning. The brains of Neolithic peoples had to be utilized on the basis of definite categories. One generation of rock carvers had to teach the next generation the elements of the repertoire of symbols and how to use them so that they were comprehensible to everyone in society. Their regular character makes clear that they were not doodles.

The search for the meaning of the markings on stone is a search for the central core of megalithic mystery. This study of the Neolithic past undoubtedly will continue far into the future because the most interesting world is the vanished world. And given the appreciation of the age of great stone monuments, an appreciation that has increased steadily in this century, one can be sure that the most distinctive features of the Neolithic landscape will remain with us and not suffer the destruction that took place in comparatively modern times. Understanding the megalithic age will help us understand what is truly human and how our humanity

evolved. The lost horizons of that age, once rediscovered, will add a new dimension to our understanding of human experience. We already know that the great leap forward in human experience from 10,000 or 20,000 years ago did not take place exclusively in one corner of the world — the Middle East — but, in good measure, on the far edge of Europe. Archaeology in this century has ensured that the megalithic world along the Atlantic wall can't be dismissed as primitive, or the people characterized as rude and brutish. It is unfortunate, to say the least, that the lens of human memory was shattered in past eras so that we do not have some human memory of the age of the great stone monuments. But the development of scientific tools of discovery enable us, with study of the human mind itself, to achieve rediscovery.

In the contemporary world, many things seem to be shifting in significance. Yet in this time of structuring and restructuring of what is important, the world of the megaliths only seems to appreciate in value and interest. This is so despite the rush of modern discoveries and developments such as the mastery of atomic power and man's flight to the moon. The great stones are inspiring survivals of a mysterious age whose mystery has not diminished. Despite all the extraordinary constructions of our time, those who visit Stonehenge find that it speaks to us. The spirit of place endures where Stonehenge dominates Salisbury Plain. Of this, Peter Levi wrote, 'The voice and genius of a place may well speak silently and obscurely, after many centuries'. We find stunning beauty in boulders assembled in remote antiquity. Their dignity consoles us in a disordered world. We long for full knowledge of the origins of the people who raised them — our forebears. We discover in our hearts a reverence for relics. Such is the overwhelming power of the remains of the megalithic age whose secrets we seek to discover.

# THE WAYS OF DEEP ECOLOGY

## by Rodney Aitchtey

WHAT is Deep Ecology? In 1972, Arne Naess, the distinguished Norwegian philosopher, extracted the term 'deep ecology' from his longer description: 'the long range international deep ecology movement'. *Deep* ecology to distinguish it from shallow or social ecology with its humanist standpoint. He described the basic difference: *'The Shallow Ecology Movement.* Fight against pollution and resource depletion. Central objective: the health and affluence of people in the developed countries... *The Deep Ecology Movement.* Rejection of the man-in-environment image in favour of *the relational total-field image*'.

To appreciate the need to have an understanding of Deep Ecology it will be salutary to refer to a book published in 1962 by Rachel Carson which alarmed, for a moment, the English speaking world. When she had finished writing *Man Against the Earth* (her working title) she sent the manuscript to William Shawn of *The New Yorker* whose enthusiasm buoyed her into noting, 'I knew from his reaction that my message would get across'. She listened to Beethoven's Violin Concerto, 'And suddenly the tension of four years was broken and I let the tears come.... The thoughts of all the birds and other creatures and all the loveliness that is in nature came to me with such a surge of deep happiness, that now I had done what I could — I had been able to complete it'. The book, retitled *Silent Spring*, struck home, and attempts were made to suppress it. Arne Naess said of her book, 'Rachel Carson went deep and questioned the premises of her society'. In 1964 Rachel Carson died. In 1969 Arne Naess resigned as professor in philosophy at the University of Oslo after thirty years, so that he could 'live rather than function'. During his time at the University he had become well known for his work on the philosophies of Spinoza and Gandhi which he put into practice in direct action in Norway.

It is almost thirty years since *Silent Spring* said, 'What we have to face is not an occasional dose of poison which has accidentally got into some particle of food, but *a persistent and continuous poisoning of the whole human environment.*' (My emphasis.) It is no exaggeration to say that we are now up to our necks in the second part of her statement. And it has taken that time to realise the urgency of measures needing to be taken. But a thirty year urgency is too late. There is no going back, but a Deep Ecology response would be to say: this recession-in-material-growth gives the opportunity to take an honest free-of-anticipated-profits look to ensure that no more harm is done. It would entail no more aggravation of the dangerous hole in the ozone shield which is being found daily to be worse than thought, and worsening, by an immediate cut-back to chemical emissions which are hourly contributing to the build-up of perilous 'greenhouse' gases. Until now, man's arrogant scrambling for profits has been at any cost. The cost is what Deep Ecology addresses.

Rachel Carson said, 'We stand now where two roads diverge... The road we have been travelling is deceptively easy, a smooth super-highway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork of the road — the one "less travelled" (Robert Frost) offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of our earth'. Rachel Carson's branch road is the way of Deep Ecology, which is extreme in that it demands a somersault in the mind in one's way of seeing the earth; in that light, to question preconceptions honestly. It will amount to an abandonment of the humanist anthropocentric mind frame.

In a debate transmitted by Norwegian television in 1971 the humanist philosopher, A. J. Ayer, agreed with Arne Naess that, 'the notion of fact is itself a dubious one, itself infected by theory', and he admitted to being 'very near to thinking with a total view'.

Dr. Warwick Fox has recently brought out an important book, *Toward a Transpersonal Ecology* (Shamblala, £7.99, paperback), which brings together the ideas behind Deep Ecology and the later synthesisation of them. The book has grown out of his PhD thesis. He claims to 'provide an almost exhaustive guide to the significant primary and secondary literature on Deep Ecology, invaluable for those who wish to follow up any aspect of Deep Ecology in greater detail'. But how accurate is the greater detail? In his listing of 'spiritual growth/peace/environmentally oriented journals and magazines', he states that *Resurgence* was founded and edited by Satish Kumar. It was John Papworth who started the magazine in 1966, and handed the editorship to Satish Kumar when he appeared after his monumental walk for peace from India to Britain in 1973.

Dr. Warwick Fox has taken on the transpersonalising (what a word) of Deep Ecology in this book, but he also expresses his need for 'ecologising transpersonal psychology' in which he admits anthropocentrism to be pervasive. At the heart of his thesis lies a contradiction. If transpersonal psychology effects the change in perception/consciousness which is endemic to Deep Ecology there would be no need to transpersonalise it. Deep Ecology's chief distinction from shallow or social ecology is that it has shed anthropocentrism. One safely assumes from Fox that transpersonal psychology does not reach the intuitive knowledge of one's interconnectedness with everything else. Thus, this campaigning book on transpersonalising Deep Ecology may be said to lead to a dead end. But on the way there is much to be taken in and applauded.

In the *Ecologist*, (Vol. 14, Nos. 5/6, 1984), Warwick Fox and Arne Naess shadow-boxed their differences arising out of Fox's paper, 'Deep Ecology: A New Philosophy of Our Time?' Warwick Fox concluded that 'where contemporary environmental philosophy is dominated by the question, "How do we construct an adequate environmental ethic?",' Deep Ecology asks the question, 'How do we cultivate a deep ecological consciousness?' Finally he said, 'This attempt to shift the primary focus of environmental philosophical concern from ethics to ontology clearly constitutes a fundamental or revolutionary challenge to normal environmental philosophy.

It is (and should be) Deep Ecology's guiding star'.

What seems to have been eluding Fox is that Deep Ecologists are not pinned down by a specific set of beliefs or practices. A Deep Ecologist has an emotional attachment or expansion of consciousness which underlies the being and interrelatedness with Nature. It is Naess' belief that as the self is widened and deepened so protection of Nature becomes protection of the self. The widening and deepening of the self overcomes distinctions so that self and other cease to be considered as separate. Naess emphasises 'the responsibility of any integrated person to work out his or her reaction to contemporary environmental problems *on the basis of a total view*'.

In 1972, Naess proposed 'a remedy for scholarly cramp' *(Chuang Tzu)* in Western philosophical tradition. He urged in the philosophical magazine, *Inquiry*, which he started and edited from 1958 to 1975, that the philosophers of East and West should compare notes because 'many open problems of philosophy such as transcendence evil, logic and theoretical knowledge, are raised by an enquiry into Chinese philosophy. If Chinese philosophy serves to make us critically aware of these problems and to provide alternative ways of thinking, we are more than justified in presenting Chinese philosophy as a philosophy of universal concern and universal significance'.

As well as Taoist antecedents there are Spinoza and Gandhi. Spinoza's belief that by knowing Nature one knows God has also been an influence in the works of Bergson, Coleridge, Einstein, Goethe, Heine, Lessing, Muir, Russell, Santayana, Schopenhauer, Shelley, Thoreau, Wittgenstein, Wordsworth, and... it cannot be an exhaustive list, though if it were it would be not much longer.

Periodically, it has been Naess' way to retreat high into the Norwegian mountains for replenishment with Nature. *Chuang Tzu* says: 'There is nothing like the light of Nature... where contraries are indistinguishably blended'. Deep Ecological thinking is not new, but Arne Naess has given it a name, one that strikes a very deep note. It has touched the philosophical nerve of the planet in distress. Is this the moment that Edward Carpenter predicted, one hundred years ago, in *Civilisation, Its Cause and Cure?* He said, 'Man will once more feel his unity with his fellows, he will feel his unity with the animals, with the mountains and streams, with the earth itself and the slow lapse of constellations, not as an abstract dogma of Science or Theology, but as a living and ever present fact'.

In 1976, Naess' seminal work on Deep Ecology was published in Norway. But it was not until 1989 that it was published here by Cambridge University Press, translated and edited by David Rothenberg. Its title: *Ecology, Community & Lifestyle: An Outline of an Ecosophy.* Ecology became ecosophy to separate it from the 'scientific world-view'. *Eco* for 'earth household' and *sophy* for 'wisdom' — 'a philosophical world-view or system inspired by the conditions of life in the ecosphere'.

Before Arne Naess' book, Deep Ecology was virtually unknown in Britain, and it has been books by American Deep Ecologists which have alerted us to its importance. But it is in America that Deep Ecology has

provoked deeply emotional exchanges, and absurd insults by the highly regarded social ecologist thinker, Murray Bookchin, who certainly could not have read *Ecology, Community & Lifestyle.* He has appropriated Chia Heller's phrase, 'Eco-la-la', which he uses repeatedly, and contemptuously in his writing. He calls Naess 'the grand pontiff of this mess' which he describes as 'the muck of deep ecology'. Again, certainly it appears that Bookchin would benefit from *Chuang Tzu's* 'remedy for scholarly cramp'.

David Ehrenfeld in *The Arrogance of Humanism* has put Bookchin into context, 'Bookchin appreciates the ecological realities of contemporary life. Why then does he embrace the unwarranted optimism of a humanistic cult whose efforts to redesign the world in our own image have given us a lengthy string of ever-worsening failures?' Ehrenfeld suggests that 'Bookchin and others like him have fled from reality to an altogether more soothing world of techno-pastoral dreams'. He also quotes *Isaiah,* 47:10: 'It was your skill and your science/that led you astray./And you thought to yourself,/"I am, and there is none but me".'

The inhumanism of Deep Ecology would be that of 'not man apart' (Robinson Jeffers) to take one beyond the relative thought which separates and competes. Naess says, 'The essence of Deep Ecology is to ask deeper questions,' to get to the root of truth, rather than merely the branches and leaves. 'We question our society's underlying assumptions. For instance, we can see that instead of an energy crisis we have a crisis of consumption.'

In America, Aldo Leopold has been adopted as a forerunner of Deep Ecology. His Land Ethic is much quoted: 'Land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants and animals, or collectively: the land. That land is a community is the basic concept of ecology'.

Aldo Leopold has acknowledged a debt to his precursor, the Scotsman, John Muir. It was Muir who said, 'When we try to pick out anything by itself we find it hitched to everything else in the universe'. For Muir there was no creature higher or lower than another: everything had an equal right to blossom in its own way and time. 'There is no mystery but the mystery of harmony,' he said.

Human despoilation of the planet has a long history, and it can only be stopped by a change in perception that Deep Ecology demands. The Spirit of Deep Ecology is about and its influence is growing. With its 'total view' it cannot but help in living the authentic, self-reliant life.

Warwick Fox's idea that his term 'Transpersonal Ecology' should displace 'Deep Ecology' could tempt one to substitute 'Gaian Ecology', but there would be no reason to change one's thinking in terms of Deep Ecology. Enough!

# WINTER IN GRAN CANARIA'S PLAYA DEL INGLES

## by Jonathan Smethurst

WHERE is there to go in January or February where sunshine is guaranteed and the sea is warm? Where a resort still bustling with lively bars, busy restaurants and crowded discoteques overlooking fine sandy beaches and yet only four hours' flying time from London?

I had mixed feelings as my Las Palmas flight, with plenty of spare seats, headed south towards the Canary Islands on the afternoon of New Year's Eve. How would the month of January compare to my previous visits in the so-called peak periods of July and August? Would it turn out to be the same as your average Spanish resort — popular and overcrowded in the high season and practically empty for the rest of the year? I had chosen to return to Playa del Ingles, the jewel in the crown of the island's famous Maspalomas district. Would I now return to find those once lively establishments boarded up in out of season darkness and would the swimmer be as much a spectacle to the locals as the 'Festival of Light?'

New Year's Day was hot. Breakfast was for once an unhurried affair, taken al fresco under the luxury of a cloudless sky. Those who had escaped for Christmas (at a price) now sat with their hand luggage around the hotel pool, savouring those very last minutes of sunshine while awaiting the arrival of the airport coach.

Enjoying about eight hours of sunshine a day, the subtropical climate of Playa del Ingles is virtually the same throughout the year with an average air temperature of 65°F which rises well into the 70s.

It is an all year round resort but sees the most visitors in the winter months with the high peak season being in fact middle January to early April. My hotel turned out to be block booked full on my last day and had I come from northern Europe or Scandinavia, my flight would have been full, for it is mostly the British who tend to come in the summer and then spend the coldest months of the year at home.

In a year, over one million visitors will stay in these four miles of coastline and the choice of accommodation is as vast as the resort itself, ranging from exclusive villa complexes and quiet seaside bungalows to the many large hotels and apartments which are mostly in the four or five star category and tend to be self-contained resorts in themselves.

Successful it is, commercialised it is not, for there was never anything here to exploit or ruin in the first place. What was until as recently as the 60s a mainly inaccessible desert of dry rocky scrub, has bloomed from being a nonentity no-man's-land to one of Europe's largest tourist centres.

Anyone on holiday for two weeks here could quite easily visit a different bar, restaurant or night club, every night, having only just touched the tip of the iceberg. A lot of these establishments are owned and run by a

flourishing expatriate community whose individual tastes are imported from as far afield as Vienna or Copenhagen, so a night out on the town could well turn into a mini tour of 'Europe after dark'. These contrasting combinations are most prominent in the Kesbah/Metro centre where I recall leaving a Spanish tapas bar in search of the toilet only to find myself walking into a Swedish tavern and Bavarian style beer hall before finally ending up in a Dublin pub.

Eating out is an experience in itself. Prices are very reasonable and the vast choice of menus include dishes from all four corners of the world. With well over 300 competing restaurants alone to choose from, you are bound to get good service, and it may come as a pleasant surprise to find the waiters articulate and correctly dressed in even the most modest of places.

Canary Island cuisine is an interesting mixture of Spanish mainland and Latin American cultures with a strong emphasis on fresh fish. Most meals are served with a cold tangy sauce known as mojos, normally accompanied with 'wrinkled potatoes' — cooked in their skins with lots of rock salt. Two dishes to look out for are *cazuela;* their own version of paella using potatoes instead of rice, and the true Canary classic *sancocho,* a fish recipe usually consisting of fresh sea-bass poached with potatoes.

The island's own equisite range of pastries and fresh fruit are usually eaten for desert. Guava, papaya fruit, avocado and melon all grow locally and like the island's bananas, they are served in many different guises.

No meal would be complete without a glass of Canary wine. Made from grapes grown on volcanic soil, they have a distinctive flavour and were much loved in the vineyard's heyday by Elizabethan England. Of the few vines now remaining in the Canaries, one label worth mentioning is Miguel Gonzales Monje tinto, a fresh tasting cherry red with a forestry fruit like bouquet.

Gran Canaria has aptly been described as a miniature continent, for beyond those jagged precipices that encircle the whole island lie nearly 600 square miles of constantly changing landscapes. It is a land of both barrenness and greenness where colossal canyons and deep ravines integrate illogically with rich farm land and vast pine forests. A higher climb will take you into timeless mountain villages hidden by eerie volcanic rock formations, where to this day, some are still inhabited by cave dwellers. Where passable, various coach excursions cover most of the island, but if you wish to explore the interior at leisure and at your own pace, nothing can beat actually hiring an open top car and most firms are happy to do business on a daily basis.

Whatever your length of stay, a visit to the island's capital is well worth a whole day of your holiday. Las Palmas is one of the most important commercial ports in the Atlantic and has long been famous for its duty-free shopping. A frequent inexpensive bus service makes the thirty mile journey in under an hour. About halfway, you will pass the international airport. Gando is named after its neighbouring coastline and it was five hundred years ago, off this very same bay — today a popular stop-off refuelling

point for airliners on the long Europe/South Americas route — that Christopher Columbus was forced to drop anchor and carry out repairs before resuming that historic voyage into the unknown.

Approaching the towns southeastern peninsula, you arrive in the commercial downtown area known as Las Palmas City. Next to the bus station is San Telmo Park with its adjoining military academy. It was from here in the early hours of the morning that Franco announced his coup d'état thus planting the seeds of the Spanish Civil War.

A traditional Canary style house is made of local volcanic rock and either gleams with whitewash or is painted a natural earthy reddish brown. Large wooden balconies, theatrically box-like in style, lean out far; supported by wooden beams of the same strong canary pine which is painstakingly carved and a main feature of the home's ornate partitioned window sections. A visit to Casa de Colon — Columbus House — is an ideal opportunity to view this architecture at its best. Formerly the Govenor's palace, it has well preserved the period when Columbus stayed here en route to America. Visitors are first received in a handsome patio area with facing murals of those great sea expeditions. The museum houses copies of his navigational charts and fine replicas of his flag ship, the *Santa Maria* and the escorting *Nina* and *Pinta* — which had to be repaired and modified in the Canaries. An unexpected exhibit here is a largescale model of Gran Canaria showing in great detail the island's spectacular terrain, a must to be viewed by anyone who is thinking of hiring a car.

A stone's throw away is the pretty palm lined square of Santa Ana, home of the monumental Las Palmas cathedral. Finally completed in 1915 it took over four centuries to build which explains the neoclassical façade and gothic interior, much adorned with fine pictures and sculptures by local artists.

At Santa Catalina Las Palmas is almost at its narrowest point and it is therefore possible to walk from the town's east coast to the west coast in a matter of minutes. However, there are 101 strategically placed distractions in between, of cafes, bars, shops and bazaars. Notable bargains to be had in these streets of Aladdin's caves are watches, cameras and other electronic goods. Prices are seldom displayed and don't be put off by the first exorbitant price quoted as one is often expected to haggle. Caveat Emptor though. Always insist on a guarantee and proof of origin. To enter any of these establishments just to browse, however, can be most discouraging. Most are run by settlers from the Indian subcontinent and their persistence for you to part with your pesetas grows stronger with every 'No'. Even window shoppers are intercepted by these tenacious shop assistants. So be warned.

The west coast of Las Palmas is one continuous bay of fine golden sand, sheltered by an off shore barrier reef. Las Canteras has rightly been ranked as one of the best city beaches in the world. Despite not enjoying the same level of sunshine as Playa del Ingles, it still remains one of Gran Canaria's most popular beaches and its safe clear waters are a pleasure to swim in.

Amongst the hotels and apartments in this enviable location, a long

walkway extends along the beach front where the crowds don't disperse until well after sundown. So it was in this delightful setting with its back to the city that I ended the day with fresh swordfish for dinner. Cooled by a gentle breeze from the Atlantic Ocean, I sipped my aperitif and watched the sun set behind Galdar mountain, deciding there and then to spend my last day and night here. Sun-tanned and fully revitalised, I was ready to face the New Year.

## POEM

### LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA

At week-ends I walk an estuary . . . .
print my feet in this trail of days,
your absence in my spirits ebb and flow.

It's safe here. Legal nets catch fair-sized fish;
the papers flap and scream. People are concerned
with their own reflection . . . but reality is still

elsewhere. (Satellite opinions
beam from the horse's mouth, laughter
canned like dog food.) And roads run

into melting horizons pocked by
creatures which have collided with
the incomprehensible future.

My students are amiably unread,
prefer notes to books, forgive
my enthusiasm, almost my age.

Hurry. Walk this ephemeral sand
by these empty seas.

Selwyn Pritchard.

# Literary Supplement

## QUARTERLY FICTION REVIEW

### by Betty Abel

*O Caledonia.* Elspeth Barker. Hamish Hamilton. £7.00. *Turning Back the Sun.* Colin Thubron. Heinemann. £13.99. *The Precious Gift.* John Bowen. Sinclair-Stevenson. £14.95. *Firedrake's Eye.* Patricia Finney. Sinclair-Stevenson. £14.95. *Of Love and Asthma.* Ferdinand Mount. Heinemann. £13.99.

Elspeth Barker's first novel, *O Caledonia,* is about an unloved, romantic girl called Janet, the child of strictly Calvinistic Scots, whose short adult life is composed of a bitter struggle to fulfil her dreams of love in the face of stern Caledonian disapproval. An almost Gothic romance in a modern but traditional Scottish setting, the story's end finds Janet lying murdered, in a black lace evening dress, beneath the cold stone stairs of a castle. The author's own childhood was spent in just such a castle — one which her father had bought to run as a school — so that her descriptions of life there are totally convincing in physical details although not in spirit.

She portrays vividly the contrast between a glorious mountainous countryside and the grimly puritanical outlook of its inhabitants. Elspeth Barker does indeed flesh out the implied drama behind Sir Walter Scott's lines from which her title is taken: *O Caledonia! stern and wild/ Meet nurse for a poetic child.* There is a strong sense of the influence of landscape upon the characters in the novel and, as in *Wuthering Heights,* dark passions are interwoven with a fierce love of the moonlit uplands. But romanticism is not all. The author's background lies in classics and poetry (she is married to George Barker and teaches classics in a Norfolk school) so that her writing is precise and scholarly as well as dramatically exciting. This excellent novel is a macabre dream in a pastoral setting.

In Colin Thubron's remarkably imaginative novel, *Turning Back the Sun,* the two places which he recreates are unreal but at the same time impressively realistic. Existing in an unidentified country, they possess characteristically Australian attributes with alien overtones of political coercion in terms of pass laws and work permits. A shabby, dry frontier town is the centre of the action but the capital city which we never visit is fertile in everyone's nostalgic memories as well as being physically by the water's edge. Typically hinterland country leads out only to the wilderness where the aboriginal natives regard the encroaching town with incomprehension and continue their more important rituals in spite of the apparent sophistication of the disenchanted town dwellers. Even two 'savages' Rayner adopts are uninvolved. These aboriginals become a silent fringe between the town and the blue distance about which neither they nor the 'white men' are at all curious. Their one dramatic outburst, totally unexpected, comes as a climax at the end of the book. They mass together silently, terrifyingly, covered in white glistening paint and surge towards the headlands in the ceremony of 'turning back the sun' as it descends over the rim of the world to usher in the night. Their true concerns are with the cosmos as it affects them, not at all with strangers beyond their tribes.

Rayner, the chief character, lives and works in the frontier town but he is obsessed by the city where he was brought up. Convinced that he really wants

to return, he makes no effort to do so or even go on a visit. It gradually becomes clear that the book is less about place than about a universal sense of loss and belonging, and the part memory plays in shaping our lives. Rayner's love affair with a local night club dancer repeats this theme, for the girl, Zoe, reveals in her pretty but ineffective performances that she too is haunted by the past and apprehensive about the future. The unattainable city has to her the thin dreamlike quality of the aboriginal dreamtime rituals. All their friends are similarly ambivalent towards the present. When a series of vicious murders besets the town and causes further unease, and an unidentifiable skin disease attacks Rayner's patients, such trials seem to stem from the townsfolks' inability to solve any of their psychic problems. Something almost like the despair found in Camus' novel *The Plague* settles upon them. Zoe and the other girls are seen by Thubron as slightly outside this generally strong theme since they are concerned only with dressing and making up. He appears to be quite unsure where his women characters fit into more practical affairs even whilst making them vivid and colourful. This is the only inconsistency in what is certainly a novel of depth and complexity written in accomplished prose shot through with rich metaphor.

*The Precious Gift* by John Bowen is basically a murder story but one in which the crime has been committed long ago. In a summer garden, the men from the Personalised Garden Design company are digging the lawn to make a ha-ha when they strike the skeleton of a woman with an unborn child still curled up in the pelvis. Solving this mystery causes an already fraught family to suffer terrible experiences. Unlike many writers of detective stories John Bowen focuses attention away from the necessary police work which is in any case cursory for so old a crime and on to Sarah, the mother of baby Jonathan. Sarah is deeply concerned to try and find out who the woman is and how she came to die in their garden. She interviews everyone who could possibly know anything about the woman, including old Miss Hedges, retired and infirm village teacher, whose past is after all shockingly sinister. In the meantime the main body of the book is a gradual and graphic unfolding of the effects of her inquiries on the villagers and on Sarah's own marriage — even to the extent of breaking up that marriage. Old local love affairs and hatreds are discovered and the whereabouts of the dead woman's brother, now in his sixties and in care as he has always been, allows Sarah to verify her conclusions.

The book is written with elegance and sensitivity. All characters are subtly drawn and behave in a credible manner; but Sarah herself stands out as a clever romantic, a dreamer whose visions lead her to bring about practical ends. It provides a convincing picture of the social life of any English village, with its agreed silences and class-conscious acceptance. John Bowen has written a most enjoyable and accomplished mystery novel, sympathetic, sharp and witty.

A refreshingly original historical novel has been written by Patricia Finney, author of two previous works of fiction. One of them, published whilst she was a student at Oxford, won her the David Higham Best First Novel of the Year Award. *Firedrake's Eye* is set in the year 1583, five years before the Spanish Armada. A ballad supposedly written by Tom O'Bedlam, making veiled political and social allegations, is being hawked round London by the ballad sellers. Rumours about a plot to assassinate Queen Elizabeth I abound and are linked with the poem. In an alleyway behind Fleet Street Simon Ames, clerk and cryptographer to Sir Francis Walsingham, is beaten savagely for

undisclosed reasons. He sets out with the help of his friend Becket to uncover the truth. Walsingham's closeness to the Queen and Court make them suspect it to be the work of someone more powerful than mere footpads. The prevailing climate of strong religious factions and a clear indication of foreign influence in the shape of Philip, King of Spain and husband of the imprisoned Scottish Queen Mary, would make treason seem likely. There ensues a complicated trail of murder and terror in which treachery and religious persecution are interwoven, breaking up families and destroying fortunes. The life of ordinary citizens in London's crowded streets is graphically represented in a way that reveals how intricately the threads of government are woven in the city's populace.

Patricia Finney not only possesses narrative power but also shows her intellectual quality by declaring in an appendix three important facts about her method — that she knowingly uses real characters alongside added imaginary ones; that she suspects although she cannot prove the true existence of the particular plot she describes as directed at the Accession Tilts of 1583; and that she uses as far as is credible the modes of thinking and speaking current at the time. A most useful glossary of Elizabethan words, now unused in common speech, is appended and also a list of characters showing which of them were real people and which were added to the story. Her language is wonderfully well suited to her subject in both narrative and dialogue. There are no unnecessary historical frills in the speech which betrays no anachronism in either known concepts or matters discussed at the time. This is in itself a remarkable achievement and imparts a distinction to the whole book. It is both exciting and satisfying to read.

Ferdinand Mount's novel *Of Love and Asthma,* whilst palpably not a comedy, is superbly comic. It charts the course of an unlikely but strangely durable friendship between two asthmatic young men who meet in an eccentric clinic dealing with allergies and chest conditions generally. Their lives are somehow inextricably linked for the future, one in which they part and re-form several times, for what reason the narrator fails fully to understand. It could be that he, Gus, feels most of the time that he has the moral upper hand in spite of Joe's infinitely greater financial success and correspondingly deeper fall from grace.

Predictably, Gus and Joe lead differently oriented lives at university. Joe pursues women and wealth before ultimately dropping out of academic life whilst Gus pursues more philosophic reflections, and drinks only the finest wines. Joe's defection is partly despised by Gus who later praises his commercial triumphs and pities his failures. The judgemental seat seems always to be held by Gus, the wry narrator of both their actions, who is indeed Joe's friend but feels an inner superiority. When Joe's illness gets the better of him after a financial disaster Gus displays an ambivalent pity tinged with contempt. Despite his unpromising material Ferdinand Mount writes with power and inspiration. His command of language and elegant plot construction make his novel memorable and moving.

## 'THINGS FALL APART; THE CENTRE CANNOT HOLD'

*The Spanish Civil War.* Sheelagh M. Ellwood. Basil Blackwell. 1991. 112pp. £4.95.

Recent events in 'Yugoslavia' have recalled us to the spectacle of fratricide in the 'common European home'. Sheelagh Ellwood's short history of the Spanish Civil War — part of the advance guard for the armada of Hispanic

books scheduled to arrive in 1992 — is therefore doubly welcome. An admirably clear-sighted overview of those tormented years, it is graced by an extensive guide to further reading which makes it the ideal point of departure for more detailed study.

It is also a very depressing book, by virtue of its subject. Neither side emerges with much credit: the Nationalist camp exhibited opportunism, ruthlessness and intolerant atavism; the Republican factions showed prevarication, indiscipline — and ruthlessness. The internationalization of the conflict seems similarly to have brought out the worst in all concerned. Whether piously washing their hands of the business, or covertly seeking to undermine the Second Republic, the contemporary democracies behaved with signal cowardice. Franco's Fascist allies, using Spain as a proving ground for Total War, were especially loathsome; yet they differed only in degree from the killers of the international Left, so gruesomely portrayed in Laurie Lee's recent revelations of his own Spanish experiences. Yeats's lines were never more apt.

Perhaps even more depressing than the bloodiness of the whole affair is the pointlessness of it. Many contemporaries may have seen the war as, in Laurie Lee's words, 'the chance to make one grand, uncomplicated gesture of personal sacrifice and faith which might never occur again', but their ideals seldom stood up in the firing line — or was that lust for redemption in battle flawed from the start? The discrediting of the ideologies which co-opted the conflict leaves the impression of a whole nation sacrificed to hollow idols; and the list of the dead or uprooted numbers some of the most brilliant luminaries of Spain's late cultural flowering. Lorca, Machado, Jiménez, Miguel Hernández, Picasso, Bunuel: all paid for their loyalty to a legitimately elected government; none were expressly Communist. Rather they had the misfortune to defend democracy in a country where many had still not accepted the legacy of 1789, and to be caught up with those who sought to have all revolutions at once and to turn a belated liberal revolution into a twentieth-century proletarian one. As for their more extreme comrades-in-arms, one is sickened to read that in March 1939, after years of heroic resistance and with the Falangists at its gates, Madrid was convulsed by savage inter-factional fighting between the Spanish Communist Party and the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party.

All sides seemed to have been clearer about what they were fighting against than what they were fighting for, and on the Republican side that confusion proved fatal. The formation of party militias and their primacy in the Second Republic's war effort betrayed the mortal divisions in its constituency; and the government's inability to control its more Jacobin followers was a gift to the enemy. The Nationalists' pragmatism in the conduct of the war seems only matched by vagueness over their motives in starting it and over their ultimate goals — such that the Nationalist political settlement gravitated to the bottom line: dictatorship by the ablest commander in the field.

Modern Spain bears little resemblance to what either the Falangists or many erstwhile Republicans would have wanted. A constitutional monarch who is a proven defender of democracy presides over a soundly capitalist state with a somewhat left-of-centre government. Catholicism thrives alongside utterly contemporary attitudes and mores. We now have perhaps a better Spain than there has ever been, and we owe this in great part to the historic defeat of both the most determined adversaries in that lost struggle of the Thirties.

PAUL STJOHN MACKINTOSH

## CASTRO AND COMMUNISM

*The Fourth Floor: An Account of the Castro Communist Revolution.* Earl E. T. Smith. Selous Foundation Press. 262pp. $19.95.

The collapse of communism in Europe has been accompanied by three types of publication. The first gives a contemporary history and analysis of what has happened in Europe. It considers also the writings of those who, like Vaclav Havel, have been regarded as the moral custodians of dissent. The second, epitomised by Francis Fukuyama's essay, attempts a philosophic discussion of the end of socialist history, and the future of liberal pluralism. Whether Fukuyama's argument is capable of being sustained or not will be evidenced by his forthcoming book, taking up the themes of his essay. The third is to do with why, outside Europe, different forms of communism continue to have strongholds. The literature on China has been highly visible, particularly in the wake of Tiananmen Square, and a fair proportion of this literature (some of which I have covered in earlier issues of *Contemporary Review*) takes the form of memoirs — either of a life of protest, or of the exhilarating days of protest in the Beijing Spring of 1989.

The book here under review falls into the third category but is a republication, and this republication has been occasioned by the survival of communism in Cuba. First released in 1962, it also is a memoir — not of protest but of a US ambassadorial stint in Havanna from 1957 to 1959, which covered the coming to power of Castro. I am appalled that such a republication was thought proper. Its language is firmly antique and, at most, in its generalised anti-communist stridency it represents a certain level of thought which was common thirty years ago. I should wish to declare myself firmly here: I am in favour of pluralism in Cuba, and I think President Castro should step down. In the three decades since his coming to power, however, what he has accomplished — either for good or bad — has greatly complicated the debate over Cuba. Any assessment of Castro's Cuba would have to consider the following themes. (1) The movement of the revolution from its amorphous ideological base to its reliance upon a communist ideology. This movement was neither predestined nor inescapable. (2) The narrowing of the revolutionary command structure and its ossification. This had as much to do with Castro's insecurity as any communistic design. (3) The dramatic expansion of cultural expression and education, which occurred alongside political censorship and persecution. This is a true contradiction and suggests a complexity in both Castro's personality and programme. (4) The independent nature of Cuban foreign policy, both in Latin America and in Angola; whereas Cuban reliance on Soviet sugar purchases and other subsidies could have been made secure simply by the fact of existence as a geographical thorn in the side of the US Monroe Doctrine. The origins of Cuban foreign policy suggest some romanticism and no little sense of nobility, as much as ideology. (5) The backwardness of Cuban industrial technology and its lack of diversification. This suggests as much a technologically-illiterate leadership as it might any doctrinal strait-jacketing.

As it is, Smith's book represents exactly a form of strait-jacketing. It has no relevance to today's debate and is merely an historical curio. It seeks, in part, to offer a commentary on the US foreign policy process; but does little more here than to fire off a few missiles at the State Department, long a target of conservative pundits on foreign affairs. Shorn of the intent behind its republication, is the book of interest as a memoir pure and simple? I regret Smith has no sense of narrative pacing, and the book's style is ploddingly one-

dimensional. I can think of nothing that recommends the book, except its elegant typeface; but I regret that trees have been felled to purvey so inarticulate and inelegant a contribution to the literature on the death and residuary nature of communisms. Vaclav Havel would be the first to say that the Cold War was not won like this.

STEPHEN CHAN

## CONTRASTING CULTURES

*Political Culture in France and Germany: a Contemporary Perspective.* Edited by John Gaffney and Eva Kolinsky. Routledge. £40.00.

On the sleeve of *Political Culture in France and Germany* it is claimed that the interdisciplinary study of the diversified political culture of contemporary societies provides new insights. There are flashes of insight as with the reference to French Republicanism now being a 'modern form of elected monarchy'. However one begins to question what value there is for the lay reader in being informed that 'the choice of such a symbol (the Republic), however, begs the question of the multiplicity of significance and connotations of "Republicanism" in French political culture. The term or the symbol's diversity is not proof of its emptiness as a cultural reference point. Indeed the opposite is equally arguable'.

Clearly this is not the most readable of books however steeped the reader may be in political and sociological thought and however fascinated one may be by the twin central powers of the European Community, namely France and Germany. Nevertheless the first chapter culminates in a useful appraisal of the new presidential Republicanism in France. It is one of those curious paradoxes that where the Left saw De Gaulle's accession to power as a quasi fascist coup, it in fact rescued Republicanism from the extreme Right and has moved to a Socialist presidency supported by many elements that were once hostile to the Left.

It is not surprising that Germany's attachment to post-war institutions is focussed on the economic rather than the political system. 'Whate'er is best administered is best' may derive from Pope but may well sum up a widespread German approach. There are very worrying signs with regard to attachment to Democracy in the upheavals that followed the unification of Germany and the lifting of the lid of repressed attitudes in the East. These reflect the lifting of inhibitions in the West. The study in West Germany is based more in market research. The conclusion is that contemporary political culture embraces a dominant consensus and a divided protest camp with Left wing and Right wing factions. However, German authoritarian state tradition surfaces again when faced with the scare of terrorism and even after nearly half a century there seems to be an inability to accept that a diversity of political positions may be a constituent component of the political process.

The book contains a series of articles on 'the politics of disaffection', 'language of politics', 'celebrities in politics and contemporary French cinema'—more particularly Yves Montand and Simone de Signoret... There is a particularly perceptive case study on political allegiance and social change in the Ruhr which extended my understanding of the German political scene. Other articles include 'change of party organisation in the SPD' and 'the battle of semantics in the Christian Democrats'.

The notes and references throughout provide excellent source material for academics and political commentators alike. During my own political lifetime a decline of the once formidable French Communist Party and the disturbing

phenomenon of Le Pen's *Front National* is not only remarkable but belies a long standing assumption which I have shared with many others that whereas Germany was by its nature a nation of the Right, France was a nation that leaned to the Left. That assumption is as simplistic as the very concept of Left and Right itself; whatever the different political cultures of France and Germany, there is a political and social phenomenon which transcends both countries and economic class interests. It is this that gives rise to the acceptance of racist and totalitarian concepts and frequently leads voters as it did in Weimar, Germany, from one side of the political spectrum to the other extreme.

The analysis of the circumstances in which the phenomenon of Le Pen was able to grow is very well presented indeed. This is however a book that will be enjoyed by the academic and the specialist rather than the lay reader; but it cannot be faulted for its scholarship.

PAUL ROSE

## THE VIEW FROM THE RASHID HOTEL

*Despatches from the Gulf War.* Ed. by Brian MacArthur. Bloomsbury. £12.99.

'You furnish the pictures,' cabled William Randolph Hearst to his artist-photographer in Cuba in 1898, Frederick Remington, 'and I'll furnish the War'. In the Gulf War, it seemed as though a similar deal was made between General Norman Schwarzkopf and Ted Turner, president of CNN TV news. For most of us, the Gulf War became a nightly TV date: not only for the story but for the analysis, and occasionally for the negotiating itself, since part of it seemed to be done via TV. If a reputation was made other than that of the Allied commanders, it was that of the never-off-the screen coverage of CNN, the Cable News Network, Atlanta-based but reporting via satellite from the ninth floor of Baghdad's tallest building, the Rashid Hotel. Although the sharpest memories of the War are those presented by round-the-clock television, lavishly borrowed by BBC and ITN, it was an imaginative venture to recall it — before, during and the aftermath — by printing some of the daily reports from 'the front'. Brian MacArthur is to be congratulated.

There are some excellent, largely descriptive, pieces here of the horror of the War, notably Colin Smith's piece in *The Observer* on 'The Killing Fields', and those of correspondents who describe the horrors of hundreds of Iraqi dead on the Mutla Ridge; notable again, Richard Dowden's *(The Independent)* reference to the road past Ur, the cradle of our recorded beginnings in what we used to call Mesopotamia, which was 'a six-lane motorway, virtually deserted except for American patrols; all along it the sickening remains of convoys and civilian cars ... bodies and bits of bodies'. Wasn't it the Duke of Wellington who said that after a battle lost, the next saddest thing is a battle won?

Some reports stand reprinting better than others: Nancy Banks-Smith's piece in *The Guardian* on the CNN operation, the 'essays' of Edward Luttwak in *The TLS* (to the theme that Saddam as villain was only some degrees worse than too many Middle East leaders), Robert Harris *(Sunday Times)* on the human impact of saturation television, and diplomacy *via* CNN, and John Keegan's strategic analysis *(Schwerpunkt* in the *Daily Telegraph).* Some pieces remind us how far their writers were out-of-line when they advocated economic not military war (Dennis Healey, Paul Foot, John Pilger, and *The Guardian,* especially in a vehement leader, January 16th, 1991).

There is a splendid concluding section on the settling of scores, with John

Keegan reminding us in savage and angry prose that strategy is not a matter of casual opinion, and rebuking some television 'grandees' (his phrase for Jeremy Paxman and the brothers Dimbleby) for their arrogance and condescension in handling sober military experts. This is one contribution that positively glows with scorn. The book is worth reading for it alone. But the book is a varied and vivid recollection of the desert storm; a reminder of the effort that went into it, and of the cost — not least in the US — that is still being paid. And Saddam is still there — and too many little Saddams also.

ESMOND WRIGHT

## THE FRIEND OF ALL

*Bob Boothby, a Portrait.* Robert Rhodes-James. Hodder & Stoughton. £20.00.

In his political campaigning in East Aberdeenshire, which he represented as M.P. from age 24 until age 57, Bob Boothby's slogan was 'The Friend of All'. It was true of the man, almost to the point of folly: too approachable, too often a ready and steady drinking companion, too much the actor on the stage. 'Where did you learn your political arts, Bob?', he was once asked. Back came the instant reply: 'Oxford University Dramatic Society'. To an Eton and Magdalen education, he added a splendid 'black velvet' voice (his phrase) and the style of a pirate king.

Two friendships marked and marred Boothby's life. One was Churchill; he was his PPS from his early days in the House of Commons. He supported him totally in his wilderness years, and played a key role in securing his elevation to the Premiership in 1940. Boothby — for a time Minister of Food — seemed destined for senior political posts. But he was accused of not declaring a personal interest in Czech Assets when he had acted for asset holders before the war. A Select Committee found against him, and he resigned his office. He never held major office again. He had, as an alternative, a star — and lucrative — role on radio and television; and he became, ever more, the friend and house-guest of all: Somerset Maugham and Chaim Weizmann, Noel Coward and Beecham, Beaverbrook and Keynes. And his friendships crossed the floor: Foot, Benn, Strachey among them.

His other friendship was with Lady Dorothy Macmillan. It began in 1929 and ended only with her death in 1966. It was known by all 'in the know' in London — though even the Press gossips had a code in those days. Through it all, Harold Macmillan and Boothby stayed not only political allies but friends. This is the first full and sad telling of the story.

Boothby personally chose Rhodes-James to tell his story — without the latter's knowledge. It was an inspired choice. He has used all the papers, public and private. What we have here is a richly-detailed portrait, warts and all: he was lucky — and unlucky. Or was he just a bounder whom no one could trust? Most of the time, he didn't trust himself.

ESMOND WRIGHT

## CENTRE — OR PERIPHERY?

*A Life at the Centre.* Roy Jenkins. Macmillan. £20.00.

Roy Jenkins has been practising writing his life of himself ever since he entered the House of Commons at the age of 28 (in 1948). He had already — the year before — edited a collection of Prime Minister Clement Attlee's speeches, and followed it with a biography of Attlee. While busy in a host of activities, he turned out 16 books, mainly biographies; his interest was and

is in people; few of his books are pieces of original research, their subjects all safely dead, but near-contemporaries. He has always, in fact, been a practitioner of the higher journalism: elegant, polished, smooth — but for the most part unoriginal and un-arresting. So it is here — except that he allows himself 658 pages. If you are talking about yourself, of course, it is always easier to write a long life (or letter) than a short one.

All autobiographies are inevitably self-centred and are always in danger of being vainglorious, but, despite its length, few reveal so little of the inner man as does this. In all the detail, there is little self-analysis. There is no awareness, it seems, that the campaigns as Home Secretary for 'liberalism' — like those of his colleague Shirley Williams in her attacks on grammar schools — are at the roots of today's permissiveness. But he writes well on Hillhead, and his affection for it — and for Oxford — comes across vividly. This is an uneven but an intriguing self-portrait; perhaps, after all, biographies are easier to write than autobiographies?

ESMOND WRIGHT

## THE LAST TSAR OF RUSSIA

*Nicholas II: The Last of the Tsars.* Marc Ferro (translated by Brian Pearce). Viking. £17.99.

This is the third book on subjects relating to the First World War by the French historian, Marc Ferro. The first thing that strikes a reader is that the *Annales* school of history, of which Professor Ferro is a leading light, is not where one would look for a biography of Tsar Nicholas II. Academics are seldom the best biographers, especially those whose primary concern is with social history. Professor Ferro is no exception. This is not to say this is not a book worth reading: far from it. But it is not a biography in the sense that we normally understand the term.

The author's primary concern is not with Nicholas II as a man, a father, or a husband but as a ruler. The book is not so much a biography as a study of Nicholas II's reign, from 1894 to 1918. There are biographical passages and a fascinating and extended 'appendix' in the form of the fourth and final chapter. This fifty-four page chapter takes up the discussion over the Imperial Family's murders at the hands of Communists. The book's enormously long chapters — four in 287 pages — makes it even more of a collection of academic studies bound by a thread of biography than it already is. There are no footnotes and one does not know if the source for statements constitutes new evidence unless the author states it in the text. For a book which claims to break new ground this is tiresome.

The translation sometimes leaves something to be desired. There are several very awkward moments and certain words which do not exist in most English dictionaries: contestation and clandestinity come to mind. Occasionally French terms are taken over lock, stock and barrel: to use 'incarnated' for 'because' (page 34) gives a theological overtone which should not be there; the 'big bourgeoisie', a parliamentary 'interpellation' and peculiarly French references — 'The idea of appealing to a Cavaignac' — are meaningless to most English-speakers. Finally, French bishops, not Russian, are referred to as Monseigneur.

More importantly, the author naturally refers the political problems of Nicholas II to French politics. It can be argued that a better reference would be England: Frenchmen have not a very good track record when it comes to monarchial government. One can very easily argue that the move to a parliamentary and constitutional monarchy could have been successful in due course;

it was not doomed to failure because of the acts, let alone the words, of Nicholas or his Empress, Alexandra. One has only to refer to the difficulties Parliament faced with the Stuarts to see this. The author is sometimes rather harsh on Nicholas II: to say he could not stand theoretical arguments is hardly a valid criticism when it comes to government — pragmatism and common-sense are virtues in government, not vices. The fact that the Tsar disliked the cinema and modern art would raise his standing, not lower it, to many observers: Nicholas II was Emperor, not Chairman of the Arts Council. Finally, to say his diary was 'dense' when it was actually a matter-of-fact record kept by a busy man is a churlish as well as an irrelevant judgement.

Despite all this, Professor Ferro's book is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the reign of Nicholas II and to the mysteries surrounding the murders not only of him but of his family.

JAMES MUNSON

## JACK'S JAPES AND HOBO'S HOBBY

*The Ripper & The Royals.* Melvyn Fairclough. Duckworth. £14.99. *The Jack the Ripper A to Z.* Paul Begg, Martin Fido and Keith Skinner. Headline. £16.95.

Old Hobo Sickert has sold another batch of tickets for yet another Netley's mystery coach tour, with, this time round, Mr. Melvyn Fairclough in the driver's entrepreneurial seat. If you are of a mind to be taken for a ride, I have no hesitation in recommending that you go along for the scenery — but, remember, it is of the two-dimensional variety.

The road this latest Jack the Ripper book travels does not, I am perfectly certain, lead to the clear centre of the century-old mystery. We have been along it before in the company of poor Stephen Knight. The familiar landmarks, albeit viewed from a just slightly different perspective, flash by — Annie Elizabeth Crook, her daughter by Prince Eddy, Duke of Clarence, Alice Margaret Crook, John Netley, the sinister coachman, and Sir William Gull, the murderous physician. But, as the road unwinds, new and alien features are presented to the beleaguered traveller's eye — Netley's veritable notebook, Inspector Abberline's long lost (long unsuspected to exist) diaries, Queen Alexandra's Prince of Wales feathers hat decoration, an actual photograph of Prince Eddy redivivus, eighteen years after his official death, alive and well in 1910, and a new leading conspirator, Lord Randolph Churchill. No byway is neglected: even the 'Monster of Glamis' (Prince Albert Victor!) and Peter Sutcliffe, Saucy Jack's Yorkshire blood-brother, are inducted into the astonishing scenario. The coincidences, fortuities and serendipities come thick and fast. They bewilder with their insolence. It is not always by any means clear whose voice we are hearing, articulating the fatuities, inviting our belief, insulting our credulity; that of Hobo Sickert or of the bemused author.

This is, as might be expected of a furniture restorer — Mr. Fairclough's everyday avocation — a very polished job. But it *is* only a veneer. It is a shame that so much dedication and ingenuity should have been directed to so trumpery an end. Regard this book as being in the nature of a Graham Greene 'entertainment' — a *jeu d'esprit.* Do not take it seriously. It lacks even a modicum of proof, a scintilla of confirmation, for any of its brazenly confident claims.

Very different from the foregoing kettle of red herrings is the magisterial offering of the most respectable and respected 'Ripperological' trinity, Messrs. Paul Begg, Martin Fido and Keith Skinner. Their book is indeed encyclo-

paedic and provides an absolutely up-to-the-minute and totally reliable account of the present state of our knowledge concerning the Whitechapel murders.

Turning, as handy yardstick, to the entries regarding the Ripper and the royals, the satisfactory opinionative information is forthcoming that: 'It is to be regretted that overall extreme caution is recommended in examining any story emanating from or otherwise associated with Mr. Sickert'. Indeed, one cannot even be sure that Hobo Joe *is* Mr. Sickert. He *claims* to be the illegitimate son of Walter Sickert and Alice Margaret Crook (Mrs. Gorman), and the grandson of Prince Eddy, but 'authorities on Walter Sickert and Prince Albert Victor have not accepted' that claim. 'In 1978, whilst continuing to claim descent from Walter Sickert and Prince Albert Victor, Joseph Gorman Sickert confessed to the *Sunday Times* that the story of the Masonic conspiracy was "a hoax; I made it all up".' Hobo subsequently retracted this confession. 'He also revealed his possession of some diaries which he said Inspector Abberline had given to Walter Sickert in 1928 for transmission to Alice Margaret Crook (by then Mrs. Gorman). These purport to contain "the key to the whole ghastly affair".'

As demonstrated, *The Jack the Ripper A to Z* comes up to proof in this as, indeed, in every other test to which I have subjected it. It is *the* essential reference volume.

RICHARD WHITTINGTON-EGAN

## DETECTIVES ON THE SHELF

*Nipper: The Story of Leonard 'Nipper' Read.* Leonard Read and James Morton. Macdonald. £13.95.

There is a useful and well-established tradition that members retiring from the more impressive echelons of the police force shall furnish us with their professional memoirs. The earliest of these, published in Scotland *circa* 1860, were Edinburgh City Police Force Detective James McLevy's two volumes of recollections of criminal alarums and excursions in and about early to mid-nineteenth-century Auld Reekie. This pioneering Caledonian work was followed, in 1863, by the publication in London of the two-volume *Autobiography of an English Detective* by C. Waters (William Russell).

Thereafter occurred somewhat of a hiatus but, beginning in 1885, with the issuing forth of Detective Inspector Andrew Lansdowne's *A Life's Reminiscences of Scotland Yard*, each ensuing decade brought its harvest of leaves from the notebooks of erstwhile exciting investigations recollected in the tranquillity of retirement. And this oblique, and often undervalued, contribution to social history, provided by the 'ghost' pens of such venerable old-time peacekeepers as Chief Constable of the CID, Fred 'The Weasel' Wensley, Superintendents Francis Carlin and Arthur Fowler Neil, of the original 'Big Four', and Savage and Cornish of the Yard, has continued right on up to the present time.

The Golden Age of detective memoirs was the 1930s, which produced a good dozen volumes. The 1940s yield was sparse; a mere quartet. But the 1950s, with eleven volumes, the 1960s, with eight, and the 1970s, with six, were collectively rich, placing on record, among others, the famous cases and distinguished careers of Superintendent Robert Fabian, Chief Superintendents Fred Cherrill, the Fingerprint Man, Peter Beveridge, John 'Charlie Artful' Capstick, Edward 'The Guv'nor' Greeno, Chief Inspector Walter Dew, who caught Crippen, Assistant Commissioner John du Rose, 'Four-Day Johnnie', and Deputy Commissioner Ian Forbes. During the 1980s, the crop was reduced to a meagre sheaf — four volumes.

This year, however, has seen the welcome publication, well in the best old main line tradition of real-life *roman policier*, of the life of a London detective. Following in the carpet-slippers of illustrious predecessors, Leonard 'Nipper' Read recounts a career which, spanning the nineteen-forties to the 'seventies, covers an extremely important sociological territory. Inevitably, the unique and leading rôle which he played in directing, from Tintagel House, on the Albert Embankment, beside the Thames, the top secret operation which brought down the criminal empire of the East End's Kray twins, is the achievement most prominently associated with his name, and here, for the first time, he reveals precisely how the Krays ran their powerful 'firm', and the way in which he succeeded in trapping them and clearing them off the streets. But the Kray story, with its sanguineous frieze of murders — Jack 'The Hat' McVitie, Frank 'the Mad Axeman' Mitchell, Ginger Marks and George Cornell, at the Blind Beggar — provides only one among many compelling glimpses which Nipper Read affords us of that half-world which he came to know so well.

He has a host of interesting and off-beat characters to marshal for introduction. They include John Edward Allen, the Mad Parson of Broadmoor; Underworld Kings and Pretenders, Jack Spot, Billy Hill and Albert Dimes; the less than lovable Lambrianou brothers, and, a mere brief encounter, Donald Neilson, the murderous Black Panther.

Worthy of particular note is Mr. Read's most vehement scotching of the strong and persistent rumour that the boxer, Freddie Mills, was responsible for the Jack the Stripper Hammersmith Nudes murders. Equally fascinating is the tale of how an old enmity between *Daily Express* crime reporter, Percy Hoskins, and Superintendent Bert Hannam brought succour to Dr. Bodkin Adams.

Mr. Read has been most fortunate in having as his co-author the very experienced criminal lawyer and writer, James Morton. Between them they have put together one of the best volumes of its kind to appear for many a year.

RICHARD WHITTINGTON-EGAN

## SHORTER REVIEW

**The Reluctant President: A Political Life of Vaclav Havel.** (Methuen. £16.99.) This biography by Michael Simmons is the first in English. Mr. Simmons writes on foreign affairs for the *Guardian* after spending many years in Eastern Europe as a reporter for the *Financial Times*. Vaclav Havel and Poland's Lech Walesa are the two most interesting national leaders to be thrown up by the political revolution which freed eastern Europe from Soviet domination and communism. Havel, the intellectual and playwright, is arguably the more attractive to western Europeans. The intellectual caught up in the reality of politics always fascinates and the author is careful to call his book a 'political' biography because the material for a full biography of this intensely private man is not there. Interestingly, the author refers to him as 'an iconoclast who rehearses'. One suspects the real revolution among the Czechs and Slovaks has only begun and this biography, written in a comfortable and straight-forward style, will be an invaluable aid in its understanding.

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# Contemporary Review

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## HUNGARY: AN ASPIRANT STATE


**by Michael L. Nash**


THE application, on July 17, 1989, of Austria, for full membership of the European Community, had significant implication also for Hungary. Everyone remembers the phrase 'Austro-Hungarian Empire' (which existed legally from 1867 to 1918) but for most of their histories, Austria and Hungary have been linked in some way, as part of a wider Central European Federation, whether of ideas or reality. Certain American writers are now linking Poland, Czecho-Slovakia and Hungary into this idea, referring to them as CET or Central European Three. Hungary would however prefer to retain its own identity simply as Hungary, although it recognises the wider context. The possibility or probability of Austria joining the Community without Hungary fills the Hungarians with a kind of schizophrenia — but also with hope — since once Austria is safely inside, it will draw Hungary after it. Coudenhove-Kalergi said, it would act as a lodestone.[1] As a first step, Hungary has signed an Association Agreement with the Community on March 25, 1991, which came into force on January 1, 1992.

Hungary knows that it is essential first to expand and restructure its economy. In fact this has been going on in some ways since the internal Hungarian reforms beginning in 1968. Political and cultural co-operation, for example in Hungary joining the Council of Europe in November 1990, have followed, and will follow. Before Hungary can think of applying to join the European Community itself there are economic pre-conditions. It must be re-integrated into the European mainstream from which it was cut off during the Second World War. Being associated with the European Free Trade Area is an important beginning to this, an agreement expected to take effect also from January 1992. There are sensitive areas in this re-joining: especially in the areas of steel and textiles. There are also, as there always seem to be, problems in agriculture, although Hungary is already a member of GATT. Hungary needs time to adjust to the new conditions, especially those prevailing since 1989. It feels that the European Community must give it concessions first. An early membership of the Community would not be wise: the precedents of Greece and Portugal may give Hungary a more cautious approach to full membership. As the Prime Minister, Jozsef Antall, has said, 'If we were in the Common Market today as equal members, we would be unable to make the grade'.

Gradualism is the name of the game, and, he added, 'It is impossible for the people to live like Germans or Austrians overnight'. But this is certainly a part of Hungarian aspirations.

At the other end of the spectrum, the break-up of the Soviet Union seems to threaten Central Europe, so recently liberated, and many held their breath during the short-lived *putsch* of August 1991. This period of break-up and reform could take ten years, a testing time. Meanwhile, Hungary is going through a process of privatisation and marketisation, even though these started as long ago as 1968.

Hungary was a member of COMECON, in some ways the Communist mirror-image of the Community. This has now been effectively dissolved and remains only as an advisory and information service — for unfinished business, something like the contracts of a company which is being wound up. It is significant that Germany and Yugoslavia were invited to attend the last session, in a sense the last rites, of COMECON. The kaleidoscope has been shaken, and Central and Eastern Europe are taking new patterns and new forms. Even in its new, much diluted form COMECON could be a rather useful tool. It could be used as a means of transitional communication between the developing states of the East and their more sophisticated partners in the West. Hungary would like to maintain trade with its old partners in COMECON (including the former Soviet republics) but on new accounting principles and hard currencies. It knows that losses will be huge to begin with. It wants to trade with the new Commonwealth but is unable to do so, because they have no hard currency to give in exchange. Thus at the moment Hungary has an excess of meat, fruit and wine, and cannot find satisfactory outlets to dispose of it all. The famous large Hungarian apples are left to rot on the ground.

COMECON, for all its faults of centralisation and the allotment of certain products to certain states, is an institution which it is rewarding to study. Unlike the European Community (until its more recent proposals on European Union)[2] there was provision for expulsion of members. It is possible that the European Community could even learn something from COMECON. The non-European members (Cuba, Mongolia, Vietnam) were the most in debt. If these were to leave, then the debts of COMECON would be lost. The investments were funded by political thinking. COMECON, from being a tight-knit, has now become a loose organisation. Members remain if they are not obstacles. It is in the interests of members not to expel one another. Thus the fringe, or former members, like Albania and Yugoslavia, may find the new COMECON a useful vehicle for communication, whatever the finality of their respective emerging forms.

Even the products of COMECON were bedevilled more by conditions than by the actual manufacture or workmanship. Thus the much vilified Trabant motor car, which always seemed to be going wrong, in fact suffered most from being put together in factories which were both cold and ill-lit. Taken apart and put together again, the cars work in fact very well!

The commitment of Hungary to democracy, and whether it convinces the West was tested when it applied to join the Council of Europe. This has strict rules and regulations. Members of the Council visited Hungary and made a thorough review of reformed political and judicial systems before making up their minds. Hungary was subsequently admitted.

There is a long tradition of political parties in Hungary, and there were even two relatively free elections between 1945 and 1948 with a multiplicity of parties. A revival of these multi-party elections have now brought in a coalition government of the Centre Right, the Alliance of Free Democrats. New elections are expected in 1994. The Parliament remains without a second chamber. This does not necessarily count against it — Switzerland has only one chamber, although there the constitutional structure is very different.

Hungary is now proud of the independence of its judges and courts. The decisions of the courts cannot be challenged by the executive but there is judicial review. Human rights are now guaranteed. Professional and political associations are allowed with one exception: none must have a programme to monopolise power. This has been adopted from the German model. The Constitution was amended in 1989, and constitutional reform has produced about one hundred new or amended laws, including those allowing freedom of public assembly and the legalising of political parties. New types of ownership are now admitted, and a new freedom of enterprise and initiative. New economic laws have been introduced. Fifteen per cent of State-owned companies have now been privatised. Foreigners can now buy shares in, and even own, 100 per cent of Hungarian companies, with one or two exceptions. The Stock Exchange and Bond market have been opened again. There is a two-tier banking system. The Chairman of the National Bank is nominated by the President of Hungary. The general feeling is that the basis of the infrastructure for joining the Community is there already now, and for the sharing of the 'four freedoms', of free movement of people, goods, services and capital.

The re-emergence of the confederative idea in Central Europe can be seen now in the growth of the Pentagonale,[3] five (and then six) countries which are intent on sub-regional co-operation. These are Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, Italy, Yugoslavia (or, rather, as things have developed, Slovenia) and latterly, Poland. The swathe of Central European states so associated with the Habsburgs has emerged again. What they have in common is so much more than anything that divides them. The long term aim of these states is to join the European Community, but in the meantime the forum of the Pentagonale is very positive and useful. Its ministers meet regularly, and have set up special committees, rather in the way that relations have developed between the European Community and EFTA since 1984. The Italians have ambitions over transport, highways and railways — and would like finance from the World Bank for these projects.

In another important venture, there has been a joint initiative over the rights of ethnic minorities, at once both the crux of the problem and of

the downfall of the Austro-Hungarian empire. You do not have to be so very old in Central Europe to remember Franz Joseph's world. The question of the ethnic minorities is a Pandora's box everywhere in Europe, whether it is in the Tridento or in Northern Ireland or the Transylvanian border with Roumania. In Transylvania there are more than two million ethnic Hungarians. It is not possible to solve all the border problems by redrawing the borders, but it may be possible to defuse many of the problems by recognizing the rights of minorities. This may be the way forward not only in Transylvania but in Northern Ireland also. If you reduce the significance of the borders, then the possibilities of full co-operation may exist. It is something being seriously tackled by united Germany and Poland with the question of the German minorities in Silesia and Pomerania, to say nothing of the Germans in the newly arisen Volga Republic within Russia. Dual language and dual nationality are two possibilities. In the short term however the problems of the flight of minorities and the endless questions of immigration controls must be dealt with now.

Austria-Hungary was ruled by the Habsburgs until 1918, and Hungary itself remained nominally under King Charles IV until his last ill-fated attempt to re-instate himself in October 1921. Although it was briefly a republic, Hungary in fact remained a kingdom from 1920 until 1946, a kingdom without a king — ruled for the most part by Admiral Horthy, rather like Spain under Franco. Horthy's red brick mansion still looks down from the hills of Buda to the Danube. His position was in some ways as anachronistic as his title — Hungary ceased to have any coasts in 1918. Yet he represented a monarchical tradition which has never quite died out in Hungary.[4] The Habsburgs cast long, lingering shadows in Central Europe where they were the major players for 600 years. Otto von Habsburg, the son of King Charles IV, is the only member of the 518[5] members of the European Parliament to speak Hungarian. He is much respected in Hungary itself for the tremendous job he has done within the Parliament, and for masterminding the passage of East Germans through Hungary in 1989. This was the same year which finally saw the death of the Empress Zita, last Queen of Hungary, whose requiem was celebrated in St. Stephen's Church in Buda, where she had been crowned with her husband in 1916. On the occasion of the requiem, attended by Otto, a closet section of the old Hungarian aristocracy emerged, clad in the jewels, dresses and decorations of 1918. Members of the public in Budapest still feel that one must dress up to go to the opera; seventy years on there is still a lingering Imperial tradition. But the respect given to Otto is only partly due to his royal blood. He is perceived as a man able to change with the times. As a mark of this the Hungarian government, in a gesture of thanks and goodwill, has given back to him his Hungarian citizenship. Although the crown of St. Stephen was returned to Hungary by the Americans in 1978,[6] it is unlikely that he will ever wear it. Several of the newly emergent political parties in Hungary invited him to stand as President, and at first he accepted. He then declined,

saying that it was not necessary for him to accept high office. 'I had to ask my friends to withdraw this (offer)', he told me, 'since under present conditions I believe I can do more in the European Community to help the nations of Central Europe than if I accepted a high office in one of these countries. I have now been ten years in the Community and have now all the links which are indispensable in this period of transition towards a democratic future.'[7]

Then of course there is the new security system that has emerged in Europe since the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. NATO is perceived by the Hungarians as a guarantor of freedom. It is also seen as having an economic and socio-political role. At the end of May 1991 the last Soviet soldier left Hungarian soil, even though Hungary had been said to be, in the previous situation, 'the happiest barracks in the Camp'. It is now time for a major security re-assessment.

Before 1989 it was legally and technically inaccurate to regard NATO as the inevitable backdrop of joining the European Community. The neutrality of Ireland gave the lie to this assumption, if that were needed. Now the defence-security-foreign policy role of the Community is more and more accepted as an integral part of the new European Order, and nowhere has this been seen more clearly than in the repeated attempts to defuse and attempt to solve the worsening Yugoslav crisis. (Croatia was for centuries part of the Hungarian kingdom within the Austrian Empire.) Hungary now sees that a stable Community establishing those kinds of institutional links with Eastern Europe could also serve as a guarantee of that order. There will be further disarmament, which is the basis of the new structure. There will be a new equal relationship with a restructured Russia, though the recent defection of Roumania, agreeing not to join any international organization of which the former Soviet Union disapproved, in exchange for much needed oil supplies, is the triumph of necessity over wisdom, and can only be regarded as retrogressive. It also puts off further any overtures which may be made by Roumania to the European Community, if it hopes those overtures will meet with a positive response. But then Roumania always was the rogue card in the pack. The former Soviet Union cannot supply the oil it once did to Eastern Europe. Hungary has lost one third of its supplies from what was the Soviet Union, a contributory cause of the fragility of its economy, then exascerbated by the privations caused next by the Gulf War. The situation is beyond the control of the Hungarian government, but it is perceived as not being beyond the control of the seven major economic powers of the world. Russian oil output is, in any case, declining. They have spent nothing in maintenance and renovation and exploitation of the oil has been to the greatest extent at the same time. Changes in the East have a vacuum of power, and there cannot be a vacuum for long. The future of Yeltsin's Commonwealth is at the heart of the anxiety neurosis felt by Central and Eastern Europe. If it is a threat, it may now be seen as a threat to NATO as a whole. It is not Hungary's intention to seek membership of NATO, but to seek close associate membership of a newly formed

NATO. This will be achieved by diplomatic links with NATO, and with the Western European Union.

The whole issue is clouded at the moment by a certain resentment within the states of Central Europe, especially Hungary, that the new Commonwealth has now diverted too much of the attention and financial aid of the West to itself, instead of to its former satellites.

In the long history of European integration, the peripheral states of Russia and Turkey have long been perceived as problem areas. It is said that Russia (or the Soviet Union) agreed to Austria seeking membership of the European Community on the one condition that a good word was put in for the Soviet Union itself! Hungary does not foresee membership of the European Community for the new Commonwealth, or even a close association. This may partly explain the resentment mentioned above. The Commonwealth has of course a split personality, being both European and Asiatic, but is this personality actually divisible? Is Moscow not a European capital?

Hungary's feeling about Turkey centre now in the conviction that the Association Agreement, between the European Community and Turkey, which took place during the Cold War, was probably a mistake. The decision was pragmatic and political, and these circumstances do not exist any more. Turkey however continues doggedly to press its case.[8] Hungary thinks that it could be an earlier member itself than Turkey—the democratic system is more fragile in Turkey, quite apart from the 'European' argument. Hungary has an ambivalent attitude towards Turkey anyway. For historical reasons, Hungary is closer to Czecho-Slovakia and Germany than it is to Turkey, which was an occupying power. The Turkish problem seems far away and irrelevant. Yet there is a strange feeling of nostalgia, as if for the culture and occupation of a colonial power. It is perhaps the same type of feeling that India now feels for Britain: history becomes, in the words of Professor Palanai, 'a little pink'. There is even a kind of sympathy for the Turkish cause.

The adjustment to money markets could be long and difficult for Hungary. It can be seen what financial trauma can be created in a wealthy and sophisticated state like Sweden, when it decides to align its currency only with European currencies in its preparation for formal application to join the Community, which took place on July 1, 1991. How much more trauma will be created for a relatively unsophisticated state like Hungary? It is to Germany, the land of the deutschmark, to which all other currencies in Europe are aligned in some way, that Hungary feels most drawn. It is to Germany that it would look to sponsor its entry to the Community. The newer, poorer members of the Community are the ones who feel most fear about the poorer, new entrants and aspirants. The agricultural lobby can be obstructive.

The Spanish Chamber of Commerce may have strong objections to Hungarian aspirations. It is the smaller states which have the greatest reservations about new entrants. The problem is with pressure groups: Greece, Spain and Portugal are all a little afraid.[9] It may be because

of this that Hungary is well advised in strengthening its links firstly with EFTA, already this year undergoing a transition with the Community, and perhaps even to seek full membership of it. It would then be able to enter with the cachet of membership of a group known for their wealth and development. The motto of many Hungarian politicians is 'fast change with as few victims as possible'. Budapest would then again be acknowledged properly for the status it has always had as a European capital, and perhaps even again as the 'Paris of the East'.

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NOTES

1. In his speech of acceptance, when he was awarded the first Charlemagne Prize in Aachen in 1950, Coudenhove-Kalergi said: '. . . (The European Community) could ensure for its member peoples a long period of peace. For Eastern Europe it would act as a lodestone, drawing first Eastern Germany and then the nations of Eastern Europe into its orbit', a prophetic statement now we are 40 years on.
2. Until the most recent proposals on European Union, i.e. The Constitutional Basis of European Union Resolution of December 12, 1990, from the European Parliament in Strasbourg, (full text published in *Human Rights Law Journal*, Vol. 12, 1-2, pp54-59, 1991):

   Para 17 — The Member States are obliged to fully uphold fundamental rights and freedoms: no State that fails to comply with this requirement may belong to the Union.

   This is the first reference in a Community document in such a way to expulsion or secession.
3. I am indebted for this information to Mr. Gabor Brody of the Hungarian embassy in London during an interview he gave me on 29 January 1991.
4. According to some of the latest commentaries, Cardinal Mindzenty (1892-1975) who was reburied in Hungary in the Spring of 1991, represented also a wish to return to the monarchical traditions of Hungary. He died in exile in Austria in 1975.
5. If we add the 18 new (East) German members, who have observer status until the next direct elections in 1994, there are now 99 German members of the European Parliament, bringing the total members up to 536.
6. It was formally returned by Cyrus Vance on January 6, 1978.
7. Letter to me from Otto von Habsburg, November 28, 1989.
8. See, for example, the recent book by the Turkish President, Turgut Ozal, making out the case for Turkish membership of the Community.
9. I am indebted for many of the foreging comments to Professor Tibor Palanai of the University of Economics in Budapest, in an interview he gave me on March 25, 1991. I am also indebted to him for sight of the draft of his new publication, 'Integration of Central and Eastern Europe into European Economy, with special emphasis on EC-Hungarian relations', *Institute for East-West Security Studies*, New York, May 24, 1990.

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## POEM

### IN HUNGARY

On the southward slopes
vines are freely greening
in the robust March sun;
as they have long done.

A smallholder appears,
grey with advancing years;
stoops to drive his post
into the patient soil.

He has printed on his mind
for half a life the map
of these collective fields,
and how the marches ran.

Begins with renewed vigour,
not to dress the vines,
but to stake again a claim
to what has long been his.

Encloses with a dogged will
the hole the state made
in his soul, robbing him
of self and of incentive.

J. D. Mallinson

# PERSPECTIVE ON COMMONWEALTH EVOLUTION

## by Raymond Tong

DURING the decades following the War of American Independence there was inevitably a good deal of doubt in Britain concerning the wisdom of further imperial expansion. Although as the nineteenth century progressed the British were increasingly becoming the leading industrial nation, many politicians in both parties felt that there was little to be gained by extending the country's responsibilities overseas and that it would be far better to concentrate on trade. This reluctance concerning the desirability of extending the empire continued throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Even Disraeli, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, privately complained about the administration of the colonies, which he described as 'these millstones around our necks'. Nevertheless, in spite of political doubts and continued opposition, it proved impossible to frustrate the energies and ambitions of an adventurous few. As trade went on expanding, so equally did the area of land to be administered. The British Empire continued to grow, often against the political grain, largely without any co-ordinated plan and administered by whatever means seemed expedient.

Eventually the tide began to turn in favour of further colonisation. When Disraeli made his important speech at the Crystal Palace in 1872, in which he outlined the three main objectives of the Conservative Party at that time, the second of these was 'to uphold the Empire of England'. Although it followed the defence of the Constitution and preceded the elevation of the condition of the people, this was the first time that the significance of the Empire had been clearly stressed in terms of national policy. Shrewdly sensing a revival of solidarity within the Empire, Disraeli declared that the people of England 'are proud of belonging to an imperial country, and wish, if they can, to maintain their Empire'. He blamed the Liberals for attempts to hasten separation and emphasized that they had been frustrated 'through the sympathies of the Colonies with the Mother Country'.[1] While the words 'Mother Country' must have seemed as ludicrous to a large part of his audience as they do to most people today, there can be little doubt that he had correctly estimated the feelings of the majority, both in Britain and the Colonies, with regard to the Empire.

During the next few years interest in the Empire continued to develop, assisted by certain aspects of Disraeli's foreign policy, including the acquisition of the Suez Canal in 1875. Gladstone himself fought the election of 1880 as a supporter of Empire, emphasizing his belief in rule by consent and his sympathy for evolving national independence. It was, however, during Lord Salisbury's years of office from 1886 that Africa was partitioned by the European powers and China divided into spheres of European interest. While Salisbury had a somewhat reluctant approach to imperial expansion, he made a number of agreements with other colonial powers, including those with Germany and France, which were not only important

territorially, but in relation to the events leading up to the First World War. Unlike Salisbury, Joseph Chamberlain was an enthusiastic Imperialist, and in a sense his declaration 'We are all Imperialists now' marked the peak of empire. Yet paradoxically it was the South African War, sometimes known as 'Joe's War', which began to reveal growing feelings of guilt in many quarters about various aspects of empire.

These feelings of guilt gradually increased as more people came to believe that foreign policy with regard to the Empire reflected primarily the interests of capitalists and financiers. The first systematic critique on this subject was provided by J. A. Hobson, an English radical economist, whose *Imperialism* published in 1902 gave a largely economic interpretation, emphasizing the dominance of financial over mercantile interests. This approach was developed further by Lenin in a pamphlet published in 1916 entitled *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism.* In this well known theory of imperialism Lenin shows how, during the last stage of capitalism, monopoly capitalists seeking profits from investment abroad, by means of their control over government direct foreign policy towards imperial acquisition in order to secure markets, raw materials and areas for investment. As a result, competing empires go to war with each other, thus producing the right sort of conditions for the revolution which will overthrow capitalism. This grossly over-simplified theory clearly leaves out a whole range of non-economic motives, and of course decolonisation has since considerably decreased any significance it might have had. Nevertheless, as the century progressed from reverberations of exploitation during the South African War to the appalling disasters of the First World War, similar beliefs were expressed in an ever increasing literary torrent.

From the growth of what Noël O'Sullivan has called 'the myth of economic imperialism', a large part of the British people increasingly succumbed during the twenties and thirties to an irrational guilt complex in relation to Britain's imperial achievements.[2] Although by finally undermining the psychological basis of empire, the Second World War considerably speeded up the process of evolution to self-government, since 1945 this strange malady has continued to flourish: weakening national purpose and pride, eroding cultural and historical realities, and at times distorting the national vision both at home and overseas. Partly as a consequence of this unjustifiably tender national subconscious, the British have retained an inflated sense of obligation, especially in relation to developing Commonwealth countries.

Yet it should be apparent, to all but the most prejudiced, that of all the nations of the world the British have the least reason for any irrational sense of guilt related to their history. More than any other nation the British have been responsible for the modern evolution and defence of democratic institutions. They have had a longer continuous experience of democracy than any other nation and have exported their liberal thought and free institutions throughout the world. Since the seventeenth century they have made a vast contribution to cultural, scientific and

technological advancement, and during the same period have contributed enormously to humanitarian endeavour. While empires have existed in all ages, Britain added a completely new dimension to imperialism with the concept of evolution to nationhood and democratic self-government. Since the Durham Report of 1839, the first step in the evolution of Canada to dominion status, the process of constitutional development towards independence has gradually taken place throughout that quarter of the globe which was once the British Empire. This concept of steady evolution to self-government, territory by territory, was unique to British colonial policy. It was quite different from the paternalism of the other European colonial powers, whose policies were largely guided by a belief in assimilation, without any consideration being given to eventual independence. It was not until after the Second World War that internal and external pressures, and possibly the successful example of the British, caused them to accept self-government as the only solution to their colonial problems. When comparing, for example, the French *Communauté* with the Commonwealth, it should be remembered that it was not until 1958 that General de Gaulle's constitution finally abolished the notion of the indivisibility of France and her overseas territories.

Looking back on the way in which the British Empire evolved into the Commonwealth, perhaps what seems most impressive is the generally steady and comparatively peaceful nature of the development involved. There were, of course, intermittent disturbances, as might be expected in such vastly differing territories spread widely around the world, but almost invariably development went slowly forward, until one by one each colony arrived at self-government. The main reason why such evolution proved possible was that with their Declaration of Independence in 1776 the American colonists had taught the British a very important lesson. They had taught them that as a colony develops, the people are likely to demand greater control over their own destinies, and that in such circumstances evolution is better than revolution. The British obviously learned the lesson well, for throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the concept of evolution to self-government was constantly in evidence. Whenever a particular territory began to develop sufficiently, and whenever the people seemed anxious to achieve a greater say, somewhere in the not too distant future lay the next constitutional step in the direction of independence. Canada, the first country to evolve to self-rule, achieved its Dominion Parliament as long ago as 1867. Australia obtained dominion status in 1900, followed by New Zealand in 1907 and South Africa in 1931, the year in which the Statute of Westminster established that such status was synonymous with independence.

It was perhaps inevitable that the first to reach independence were countries with a preponderance, or at least a large section, of people of British origin. In such countries there were comparatively few complications in handing over power and invariably there was a reasonable assurance that the democratic institutions that had been evolved would continue to flourish. However, as Harold Macmillan once pointed out: 'The principles

which have dominated all our history could not be kept for home consumption only. National pride; individual freedom; representative government; the separation of the judiciary and the executive; the steady development of a government responsible to the electorate and an ever-widening electoral suffrage — these things could not be kept as a sort of esoteric cult in Britain alone'.[3] Wherever they went the British took their democracy with them, exporting freedom to every territory they administered, whatever the religion, creed or colour of the population. After the Second World War, in a climate that was very receptive to self-determination, first India, Pakistan and Burma, then one after another the remaining Asian and African colonies took the final constitutional step, occasionally arriving at self-government even more rapidly than they had previously envisaged. Every one of these new nations was destined to begin independence with a democratic legislature, even though many of them very soon decided that such a form of government was not appropriate to their needs or found that they lacked the necessary will to sustain it.

It is sometimes argued that especially in some African colonies the pace of evolution was far too rapid. Certainly if the evolutionary period could have been extended by two or three more decades there might have been a better chance of avoiding the coups, civil wars and dictatorships that subsequently occurred. But of course it was not to be: the political realities of the times made any extension of the period of tutelage entirely unthinkable, both for the African colonies and for Britain. In Africa, although many African civil servants, educationalists and others realized only too well all that could be gained in terms of stability by extending the preparation for nationhood, the majority of educated Africans were anxious to have independence as quickly as possible, perhaps understandably eager to obtain the power, wealth, appointments and other advantages it would bestow upon them. In Britain there was almost equal enthusiasm among all parties for the granting of independence wherever it was seriously demanded. During the fifties and sixties the majority of people who thought about the matter were largely against the continuance of colonies, while among those directly involved it was generally felt that everything possible had been done within the time available to ensure reasonably smooth working after self-government. Since the Second World War there had been a deliberate policy to train Africans to take over key positions in the civil service, the police, the army and so on, and as most colonies at that time enjoyed economic stability there seemed to be little reason why the new nations should not continue to function as happily as before. Even though such sanguine opinions were usually justified only in the short term, it says a great deal for the ability and dedication of the British officials in the countries concerned that not only was the transition from colonial status to independent nation invariably smooth and friendly, but that the momentum of their policies usually provided a few years of peaceful development after their departure.

In retrospect it would doubtless have been better for Britain, as so many early nineteenth century politicians believed, if British energies with regard

to Africa, Asia and some other areas could have been strictly confined to trade. But clearly if Britain had not accepted the problems of government and development, either some countries would not have been developed at all in the modern sense or, much more likely, such responsibilities would have been assumed by some other European power. In either case the eventual outcome might have been preferable for the indigenous people involved. After all, the matter can be looked at from many points of view, and nothing is ever enough. However, the undeniable fact remains that in many parts of the world, where once the forests, savannahs and deserts were sparsely populated by people living a purely tribal existence, the determination and vision of British men and women have helped to produce new and thriving nations, with all the necessary superstructure of modern states. Values change and memory is short, and it is now difficult to visualize how an area of Africa the size of East Anglia was once very adequately presided over by one man, his dog and a walking-stick. It is equally difficult to envisage those later colonial administrators gallantly striving to produce parliaments modelled on Westminster or those colonial education officers desperately endeavouring to achieve primary education for all before self-government. Nevertheless, the more one ponders the contemporary world and the more one studies the evolution of the Commonwealth, the more it becomes apparent that if any debt remains still owing, it is emphatically not owed by Britain.

Yet while the British undoubtedly have a very good record in assisting the various peoples to evolve to nationhood, it was clearly not possible for them to have much effect on the eventual character of the Commonwealth as a whole. This obviously depended on the political, economic and cultural aspects of the independent member nations, as well as on their relationships with one another. Unfortunately, since the growth of the Empire was often reluctant and very haphazard, incorporating a vast motley of people at almost every stage of development, the Commonwealth has slowly emerged into a nebulous association of very diverse and often unrelated states, seemingly united only by the use of English as the common language. Although sometimes sentimentally spoken of as a family of nations, there seems to be no way in which they resemble a family. Politically, economically and culturally the members differ very considerably, while their relationships are both tenuous and vague. Indeed, having regard to the conflicting nature of the membership, it seems likely that the Commonwealth would not have survived for so long were it not for the reasonably firm basis provided by Canada, Australia, New Zealand and, of course, Britain. Having been among the original participants in the years directly after the Statute of Westminster, when their collaboration was mutually important, these old Commonwealth countries have always provided an enlightened sense of purpose and a semblance of stability.

Today the presence of such advanced democratic nations at meetings of the Commonwealth tends to disguise the fact that many of the countries taking part are very far from being democratic. Owing to the fact that when they became self-governing many of the new states soon dispensed

with democratic institutions, included among the governments represented at any Commonwealth assembly there will be every kind of tyranny from oppressive one-party states to military dictatorships. To give a few examples from Africa, there are one-party states in Tanzania, Malawi, Kenya and Sierra Leone; military dictatorships in Nigeria and Ghana; while in Uganda the tyranny, both civil and military, has often been truly appalling. Of course, it has long been the practice in Britain to explain that for some developing countries democracy is not really a possible form of government and that a monolithic one-party system with arbitrary, centralized power may be much more suitable. It is argued that in order to achieve rapid economic and social development such countries must leave in abeyance the legacy of liberal thinking they received from the departing British. The dictatorial new potentates, basking in glory, must therefore be accepted as the leaders of aspiring nations hopefully on the way to a better life. However, apart from the obvious failure of centralized bureaucracies in dealing with economic and social development, even for the most naive, freedom remains freedom and repression remains repression. And clearly delegates from the advanced democracies attending meetings of the Commonwealth must often be under considerable strain when endeavouring to gloss over reality and bridge the unbridgeable.

Another problem, equally disturbing to the more advanced states, is the way in which some African and Asian countries often take an unfriendly stance in relation to Western interests. Although at Commonwealth summit meetings even the most authoritarian leaders endeavour to project an enlightened image, the realities of their anti-democratic manoeuvring can often reveal a rather different picture. A few of the so-called non-aligned countries have in the past tended to play both ways at once and have often appeared non-aligned only in relation to their friends in the West. Even when states remain obviously within the democratic Western sphere of influence, they occasionally show scant regard for the Commonwealth connection. An obvious example of this was provided in 1983 by the Grenada crisis, when the Governor General and the Organization of East Caribbean States successfully appealed to the USA for military intervention, and not as one might expect, since the Queen is the head of the Commonwealth, to Britain. In view of the fact that the Queen has always remained steadfast in her support for the Commonwealth, this episode was perhaps particularly unfortunate. Of course, like the references to neo-colonialism and the old-fashioned Marxist cant still used by some members, such displays of diplomatic disregard do little more than emphasize the already obvious divisions within the Commonwealth. They must nevertheless be somewhat disillusioning to even the most blinkered advocates of that vaguely remembered Commonwealth vision.

Although the main preoccupations of British foreign policy are now clearly concerned with the European Community, East-West relations, and the global relationship of the USA, Japan, Germany, France and Britain, the entanglement with the Commonwealth illusion remains. The British continue to play a prominent role, albeit with waning enthusiasm,

in an association whose nebulous function can have little present or future significance. Moreover they do so with the obvious realization that such involvement can sometimes be diametrically opposed to Britain's national interests and can perhaps hinder a sensible evaluation of important international issues. There could perhaps be some justification if there were definite advantages to be gained in terms of trade. However, at the moment most Commonwealth states trade less with Britain than they do with a few other countries, while any advantages gained by concentration on Commonwealth trade are usually more than offset by advantages lost outside it. Inevitably the pattern of trading partners changes and a fairly unimportant trading partner in the present decade may become much more important in the next. If the Commonwealth ceased to exist, or if Britain was no longer a member, it is likely that while British trade with some of the present member countries would continue to decline, it might revive dramatically with others. Likewise, in the rest of the world, it is likely that there would be greater activity in some countries with whom trade is somewhat less pronounced at present.

One justification for British irrationality with regard to the Commonwealth is sometimes expressed in terms of 'kith and kin'. In countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada, where a great many people still value their English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish roots, it is obvious that there is a very real family intermingling, which is likely to produce a vague sense of special relationship. But from a political and economic point of view, Australia and New Zealand, owing to their rapidly developing role as Pacific Basin powers, are becoming increasingly distanced from Britain. While Canada, owing to geographical position and common interests, has moved nearer and nearer to its neighbour, the USA. As a result, their distancing from Britain is no less apparent than that of those African states whose main allegiance is to the Organization of African Unity. While Australia, New Zealand and Canada do not express such distancing with the scarcely veiled hostility sometimes in evidence with one or two African countries, from time to time they quite correctly indicate that their economic and political interests are no longer related to those of Britain.

Fortunately this steadily increasing separation is far from being one-sided. On the British side similar distancing was made entirely manifest to all the Commonwealth countries when Britain abolished 'Commonwealth preferences', having accepted that they were incompatible with their membership of the European Community. By taking this decisive step the British made it clear that henceforth their membership of the European Community was going to be far more important, as far as they were concerned, than their Commonwealth membership. From this point onwards it should have been obvious that there could be no going back, that Britain's involvement would inevitably decline. Although today Britain still contributes 30% of the budget of the Commonwealth Secretariat and provides premises in London at a nominal rent, there can be little doubt that with every passing year the British commitment to the Common-

wealth is becoming gradually more tenuous. Indeed it seems likely that this commitment continues to survive, perhaps like the Commonwealth itself, largely due to a self-deceiving lethargy, a long and meaningless imperial hangover.

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NOTES

1. *The Conservatives: A History of their Origins to 1965*, edited by Lord Butler. Allen & Unwin, 1977.
2. *Conservatism*. N. K. O'Sullivan. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1976.
3. An address on the subject of Africa by the Rt. Hon. Harold Macmillan, M.P., at the Royal Commonwealth Society on 13th April 1960.

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[Raymond Tong was in HM Overseas Civil Service in Nigeria and Uganda from 1950 to 1961, holding among other posts that of Principal of the Government Teacher Training College, Ibadan. From 1961 to 1982 he worked for the British Council in South America, India and the Middle East, his posts including that of British Council Representative in Kuwait.]

In the April number of *Contemporary Review* Lawrence Tal draws attention to the coming Middle East water crisis and Michael Olshausen investigates insider trading on the German stockmarket.

# THE FOREIGN RELATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY OF SPAIN — PART TWO: SPAIN AND LATIN AMERICA

## by Anthony Gooch

THE first modern European State, created by the union of the Crowns of Castile and Aragon, was destined to become immensely and vastly powerful under Charles I (the Emperor Charles V) and Philip II. And the combination of the feats of the *tercios* in Europe with those of the *descubridores* and *conquistadores* in America and in the Far East was to give rise to the first great intercontinental European Empire.

The history of South, Central and also of much of North America is intimately bound up with Spain from 1492 to the nineteenth century and, indeed, in the broadest sense, up to the present day. The Hispano-American connexion, despite many a wart, is naturally an extremely important one for Spain — a Special Relationship, and it is significant that, whereas, when an Englishman uses the word 'America', he nearly always means the United States, the word *América*, in Spanish, traditionally refers to the lands south of the Río Grande. There is a natural, innate bond between *la madre patria y sus hijas* — the mother country and her daughter nations, although, because of the inevitable elements of love and hate involved, we might, perhaps, speak of the '*Casa de Bernarda Alba* syndrome'. The struggle for and achievement of independence inexorably brought about an estrangement, which manifested itself in many ways, one being a marked tendency for Latin Americans to look to France rather than to the Peninsula for education and culture, so that, significantly, in many parts of Hispano-America, the verb for 'to pass' (in an examination) is not, as in Spain, *aprobar*, but *recibirse* (cf. Fr. *être reçu*). Nevertheless, the links with Spain have always, perforce, been many and subtle, and pre-eminent among them is *la lengua*, the Spanish language, a nexus of incalculable importance, and one deeply imbued with sentiment, something which, as is well known, is frequently more important, in Latin countries, than considerations of an economic or political nature. There is certainly a great deal of rhetoric attached to what, in Spanish, is called *la hispanidad*, and some have been inclined, on occasion, to ask 'where's the beef?' and to contend that there is certainly more substance in the British Commonwealth and the Union of English-Speaking Peoples.

Be this as it may, there is no doubt about the general official sympathy and support from Spain for all Spanish-American countries, without exception or distinction, a stance which involves a policy of neutrality or, perhaps rather of 'neutralism' — an even-handedness in disputes among those countries. On this question, Benny Pollack, in *The Paradox of Spanish Foreign Policy*, has this to say: 'Spanish South-American foreign policy has consistently and historically followed an independent pattern, without generally succumbing to pressures to take sides in favour of or

against specific political régimes in that area... The pursuance of Spain's neutrality in Latin America is a *sine qua non* condition of her foreign policy, for there are so many regional conflicts with deep roots in its history and geography that no country with any aspiration to influence could afford to take sides.' At the same time, Spain has been at pains not to give an impression of indifference to bilateral problems, but to show solicitous concern. Hence the use of another term — 'subdued neutrality' or 'tempered neutralism'.

The *milagro económico español*, the economic miracle presided over by Franco in the later days of his régime, was followed, after his death, by another miracle, that of the *transición*, and this bloodless evolution from dictatorship to democracy was to become an example for all those Latin Americans who yearned for such a change in their own countries. If Spain could do it, why couldn't they? The Mexican writer Carlos Fuentes, referring to a whole series of democratic episodes in Spanish history, argues cogently, in the edition of 22nd July 1991 of the magazine *Cambio 16*, that what happened in Spain after 1975 was in fact the continuation of a democratic tradition that had been interrupted, not something without roots come into existence out of the blue. And the fact that Spain was capable of successfully reviving that tradition stands as an example for the whole of Latin America. No longer do Latin Americans have to look to foreign, Anglo-Saxon models; they have the example of Spain to follow. 'Our democratic model no longer lies inevitably to the North', he says, 'we have one within ourselves', i.e. within the Hispanic world. Certainly, since 1975, there has been a growing Spanish interest in fostering the spirit of democracy across the ocean, a Royal Visit to Mexico, Peru and Argentina in 1978 having this object specifically in view and being followed by a string of further endeavours over the years. The fruits of these endeavours, in combination with changing circumstances, can be seen today in many parts of Latin America.

**Argentina**

Amongst the nations of Latin America, Argentina, for all her shortcomings, is clearly one of the most important. But, apart from this general consideration, there is a specific cardinal point to be made: the special debt of gratitude owed by Spain to the Argentina of Perón for the supply of essential foodstuffs when all other backs were turned against her. In addition, in 1947, Evita Perón went to Madrid on a State Visit, and had a tremendous impact on a weary, drab population, starved not just of food, but perhaps even more of a taste of glamour. Spanish pro-Perónism under Franco and Argentinian pro-Francoism under Perón complemented each other. Both régimes were, after all, considered pariahs immediately after the Second World War because of their philandering with the Axis. Both were headed by charismatic, personalist *caudillos* with a Catholic-integralist vision of society, in which the Church and the Armed Forces cemented the pillars of State. Both restructured their societies in an authoritarian style.

When the Galtieri junta invaded the Falklands, in April 1982, Spain,

as a democracy and especially a young democracy only recently saved from a military coup, felt constrained to condemn the act of aggression, but, at the same time, reiterated her traditional support for Argentina's long-standing claim to the islands.

Hispanic-Anglo-Saxon relations were not assisted by references in the British press to 'Spanish-speaking monkeys in Buenos Aires' or by the members of *Fuerza Nueva* who urged the Spanish government to throw the British and their monkeys off the Rock. More seriously, in Spanish ears, the cry *'Malvinas argentinas'* had and has a ring very similar to that of *'Gibraltar español'*. But Spain had to balance her 'Spanish-American vocation' with her 'European vocation'. The Falkland/Malvinas War was thus almost as much of an embarrassment to Spain as it was to the United States. Both countries found themselves torn, to a greater or lesser degree, between the two contestants.

When President Alfonsín paid a visit to Felipe González in Spain, a joint declaration was made to the effect that Spanish support for Argentina's Malvinas' claim and Argentine support for that of Spain to Gibraltar were basic tenets of the foreign policy of the two countries. In short, Spain and Argentina have in common, amongst many other things, the fact that they consider themselves to be victims of an anachronistic colonial situation which has to be corrected in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

**Chile**

Once known as the 'England of South America', not least for its parliamentary system, in 1970 Chile voted in the Popular Unity Government of the Marxist Salvador Allende. Notwithstanding the Marxism, the hand of friendship was extended by Gregorio López Bravo, Franco's Foreign Minister at the time. Allende was ousted in 1973 in the US-assisted right-wing military coup engineered by Augusto Pinochet, who was to remain in power for 17 years. The steady relationship of Spain over the *whole* of this tortured period is an excellent example of her habitual 'neutralist' policy in Latin America. Régimes may come, and régimes may go; Spain's relationship is with the Hispanic peoples, regardless of what type of government happens to be in power at any given time.

**Cuba**

Known as the 'Pearl of the Antilles', Cuba has always had a special place in Spanish hearts, and her loss to the United States was almost certainly the bitterest blow in the whole humiliating *Desastre* of 1898.

A contradictory situation of special interest arose when, in 1959, Fidel Castro implanted in Cuba a Marxist state. Franco staunchly maintained his support for Cuba despite the nature of the Castro régime, and even went so far as to defy President Kennedy's blockade in 1962. The possible reasons are interesting. Firstly, there may well have been a desire on Franco's part to assert Spanish independence in the face of charges of excessive subservience and loss of sovereignty following upon the signing of the 1953 Treaty with the United States. Secondly, given his matriarchal view of *la hispanidad*, Franco may well have felt that it ill behoved Mother

Spain to abandon her Cuban daughter, however wayward she might have become. And there was also the decolonization issue of the 'Cuban Gibraltar' — the Guantánamo enclave: another piece of Anglo-Saxon colonialism perpetrated at Hispanic expense. Doubtless *El Caudillo* in Madrid had a warm thought for his opposite number in Havana as he chuckled at the discomfiture of the Kennedy Adminstration over the 'Bay of Pigs' débâcle.

Democratic Spain has pursued a similar policy. Adolfo Suárez, having developed a close friendship with Castro in the halcyon days of UCD, with a famous *abrazo* photograph to prove it, last year suddenly paid his old friend a further visit. Felipe González, too, has been to Havana, and at the recent Latin-American summit held in Guadalajara, Mexico, both he and Don Juan Carlos had talks with the Cuban leader. All of them have endeavoured to convey the same message: the time has come for reform, for change, for a transition to democracy; to put it bluntly, as they doubtless have, communism has collapsed practically everywhere, and the signs are clear that its days are numbered in Cuba, too. Their efforts have been of no avail, but, neither have those made by the Russians themselves. Notwithstanding, relations remain good. Indeed, it is even rumoured that Felipe González and Manuel Fraga, now President of the *Xunta* of Galicia and another recent visitor to Havana, have worked out a scheme to offer Castro, when the crunch comes, asylum in the land of his fathers, blood once again proving thicker than water.

Somewhat unjustly labelled by the United States 'the Ceaucescu of the Caribbean', Castro, with something, rather, of the political Don Quixote about him, goes on his way. Never, of course *Our* Man in Havana, Castro was for long, at least to a degree, *Their* Man in Havana. Now, he is what undoubtedly he always was — *His Own* Man in Havana: a true Hispanic individualist. Franco would almost certainly have given this old tiger of the Caribbean his due: a nod of recognition for a fellow *gallego* with guts, almost a latter-day Viriathus set on defending his Cuban Numantia to the end.

**Nicaragua, Guatemala and Panama**

As might have been expected, Felipe González's Socialist government gave strong support to Daniel Ortega and his Sandinistas as the vanquishers of the loathed dictator Anastasio Somoza. This support decreased when the Sandinista régime showed signs of becoming dictatorial. Nevertheless, Spain had scant sympathy for either the Contras or their US backers. As far as Spain was concerned, the United States had added a fresh blot to its copy-book, by giving its support, as so often in Latin America, to the 'wrong' side, getting embroiled, to boot, in a scandalous 'Irangate' or 'Iranagua'.

It is interesting to note that, when Ortega finally decided to take a leaf out of González's book and ditch the word *socialismo*, it was too late. Felipe González long ago saw the writing on the wall and forced his party to ditch the word *marxismo*.

North of Nicaragua, Spain has supported Guatemala in her irredentist

claim to be the self-governing British colony of Belize, while, to the south, in the Canal Zone of Panama, she sees another Anglo-Saxon 'colonial enclave situation' crying out to be properly resolved. She was sharp in her criticism of the US invasion of Panama in 1989.

In such peace initiatives as those of the Contadora Group and of President Arias in Costa Rica, Spain has made every effort to give support.

**Mexico**

Mexico was outstanding in her opposition to the Franco régime, and extremely active in all efforts to maintain the exclusion of Spain from the United Nations Organization, right up to 1955, the year of Spain's eventual entry. It was Mexico that, after the Civil War, took in the Republican Government in exile, whose headquarters were established in Mexico City, and she sustained her recognition of this body as the legitimate Government of Spain until after the death of the dictator. It was only after the advent of democracy that the shapers of Spanish foreign policy achieved a return to normal relations with Mexico.

Carlos Fuentes, referring to the Mexicans/Chicanos/Wet-backs in California and other Southern States of the great Northern Giant, has said that they are not like other immigrants, 'for this was once *all Mexico's land*', and he could have added 'and before that *all Spain's land*'. Referring further to such immigrants, he has also said that they live suspended between two cultures, caught between memory of the old country and desire to prosper in the new. So it has been, too, with thousands upon thousands of Spanish immigrants in Northern Europe, many of them in countries which were also once, in the days of Charles V and Philip II, under the sway of Spain.

Thus Latin-American and Spanish experiences sometimes merge, forming, just as they do when they diverge, part of a usually unspoken historical and psychological background to the foreign relations and foreign policy of Spain today.

**Spain, Latin America and the European Community**

Among the members of the EC several have important bilateral relations with countries in Latin America, notably Great Britain, France and Germany. There has, however, been little contact of a general EC-Latin America nature. And in this area Spain considers that she has a singularly important role to play. Given her Special Relationship with Ibero-America, she sees herself as the obvious intermediary, the natural bridge between Europe and the Latin world across the Atlantic, the natural spokesman for Europe in Latin America and for Latin America in Europe: *'España pretende ser la conciencia latinoamericana de Europa'* (Francisco Fernández Ordóñez) — It is Spain's aim to foster in Europe an awareness of Latin America.

Unhappily for the Spanish Government recent events have inevitably resulted in the European Community — never madly enthusiastic about Spain's grand Latin-American design — fixing its sights on Central and Eastern Europe at the expense of the developing countries across the Atlantic.

Democratic Spain has been assiduous in making trade and co-operation agreements with countries like Mexico, Argentina and Chile and seeking such agreements with others. She wishes to make it known in this year of 1992 that at least she is succeeding in her own individual bridge-building endeavour.

**Columbus, 1492/1992 and All That**

Cristóbal Colón/Christopher Columbus and those who followed in his footsteps, Cortés, Pizarro and a whole string of *adelantados*/frontier province governors, as well as numberless officials, soldiers and settlers, what were they? — heroes of a magnificent epic or villains in a wretched catalogue of crimes against humanity and nature? How should we view the momentous voyage of the *tres carabelas:* the *Santa María*, the *Niña* and the *Pinta*? Was it, in the words of *Time* (October 7th, 1991), 'the first step in a process that produced a daring experiment in democracy, which, in turn, became a symbol and a haven of liberty'? Or was it an expedition of savage aggression, the result of which was that 'indigenous peoples were doomed by European arrogance, brutality and infectious diseases'? Should we look on Colombus as a symbol of courage, hope and achievement on a grand scale or as one of greed, rape and genocide on a horrific scale?

Those mindful of the original inhabitants of the Americas having brought the word *descubrimiento*/discovery into disrepute, official Spain has tended increasingly to opt for the word *encuentro*/encounter, meeting, while wags have said that what took place across the Atlantic in 1492 and thereafter was not so much an *encuentro*, rather an *encontronazo*, i.e. a violent or head-on collision. Certainly what Spain and, in particular, the Spanish Government had envisaged as a grand celebration has been turned by some into a fierce battle between critics and apologists.

The apologists point out that the concept of human rights, in so far as it existed at all, was, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, at a decidedly theoretical stage, while that of environmental responsibility simply did not exist. Notwithstanding, Spanish legislation and men like Fray Bartolomé de las Casas did what they could in the interest of the Indians. That appalling abuses occurred cannot be denied, but neither the Belgians nor the British nor the Dutch nor the French nor the Germans can boast anything like blameless colonial records, and many abuses, indeed atrocities, were committed under their rule in much later periods, when it was generally assumed that Europeans had become far more civilised in their attitudes and conduct. And what shall we say of the fate of the North American Indian at the hands of nineteenth century men essentially of Anglo-Saxon origin?

The *leyenda negra* was a hostile, biased version of a history that was, in fact, like all histories, *clair-obscure*, and the Spanish Government feels that their country has no more reason to hang her head in shame for her record in Hispano-America than other nations for theirs in other parts of the world, possibly less. Most Latin Americans agree with them and there is a Hispanic consensus that 1992, despite all, is a year for legitimate celebration.

# HARD TIMES AND CHANGED DAYS FOR THE SCOTTISH KIRK

**by R. D. Kernohan**

SCOTLAND is a small country of great contrasts and many paradoxes. The contrasts are even apparent in the conflicting national stereotypes of the dour Calvinist and the raucous football supporter. But some of the paradoxes pass almost unnoticed — including what may be the most remarkable at a time when national unease and assertiveness dominate politics in Scotland and set the tone of the Scottish media, often as raucous as the football terracings.

For the most distinctively Scottish of institutions, the Kirk of the Calvinist inheritance, is in apparent decline, both statistically and as an expression of national ideals and traditions. It is also in considerable internal confusion, both in trying to express the idea of a 'national church' in a secularised (and pluralised) society and in finding the right mixture of tolerance and discipline to renew the theological coalition which sustained it through most of this century.

The statistical problem is more easily measured. In the last 30 years the Church of Scotland (which includes well over 90 per cent of Scots Presbyterians) has seen its communicant and electoral rolls fall from 1,300,000 to under 800,000. The proportion of adult Scots formally committed to the Kirk has fallen from a third to a fifth — and an ageing fifth at that, for the decline in Sunday schools and confirmations has been even greater.

The problem, of course, is not unique to the Kirk. In Scotland it has affected almost all the other Protestant denominations and, in so far as it is possible to make comparisons where both statistical concepts and religious ethos are different, there are signs of similar worries for the Roman Catholic Church. About a sixth of Scotland's population is reckoned as Roman Catholic, still largely concentrated in areas of nineteenth-century Irish immigration but no longer so distinctive a community within the Scottish community — or so intensely committed in its religious practice.

Arguably, religion as a way of life and the Church as an institution still count for more in Scottish life than in most countries of Western Europe. Regular church attendance, for example, involves a substantially larger minority of the population than in England or even Wales. Bible Society-sponsored research in the 1980s suggested 17 per cent of Scots adults were weekly churchgoers, as against nine per cent in England and 13 per cent in Wales. But three factors make this comparison misleading.

The first is that the Scots figure may have fallen appreciably in the last few years, to judge from annual membership returns and continuing closure of churches. The second is that the main expression of the Scots religious tradition, the Church of Scotland, has special difficulties in seeking renewal and revival. The third is the paradox that the distinctive

religious culture which was the main expression of Scottish national identity during 250 years of political union appears to have lost much of its relevance at a time when a substantial minority of Scots challenge that union and very many others at least want to reappraise it and revise its terms.

It is true that for nearly half a century the Church of Scotland has fairly consistently, if sometimes lukewarmly, associated itself with a succession of calls for devolution or Scottish self-government within the United Kingdom. But this fairly modern and never very politically significant posture of the Kirk tends to obscure the extent to which it was identified with a union which both secured its position and assured its role.

It was not merely that the union of 1707 recognised a Presbyterian religious establishment in Scotland, where it was the Episcopalians who were 'Dissenters'. That provision not only affected forms of ecclesiastical government but recognised a much wider role for the Church. Far from being the incorporating union it seems at first sight, the settlement of 1707 in effect recognised the Kirk as a devolved legislature and administration in control of public morals as well as parish churches and providing Scotland's Ministries of Education for Schools and Universities and of Social Security.

Yet there was a profounder sense in which the Kirk, without ever planning it, found a role as expression of a national identity in alliance and affinity with that of England but distinct from it. Although in the first decades of the union the Kirk resisted and abhorred one expression of Scottish separatism — support for the exiled Stuart dynasty — it settled into a different role when the Jacobite threat dissolved into a romantic haze. So long as the average Scot was some sort of Presbyterian — and it hardly mattered which sort, even in the days of Presbyterian schism — he had a focus for a sense of distinct identity within the British Isles.

His legal and academic as well as religious traditions sometimes kept him more closely in touch with Continental Europe than was usual among English lawyers, dons, or churchmen, but they were never seriously at odds with his economic involvement and commitment to the wider political community of the British Empire. And whatever emotional need he had to guard against absorption by England and English ways could readily be catered for by the by-products of a different religious culture.

It may be self-evident that Scottish nationalism could scarcely flourish while so much of the energy of the Scottish people went into extending, developing, exploiting, and policing the British Empire. It is much less evident, but perhaps no less true, that the decline of religion as well as the decay of empire created a new situation. It is not merely that nationalism, like Marxism and even Imperialism in their day, can be a substitute for religion, or can arouse emotions and forms of devotion previously associated with religious doctrines and communities. For 250 years Scotland found itself in a paradoxical situation where what had originally been a very international and Continental European form of Christianity had not only set its stamp on the national character but helped to ensure

that political union in Britain did not bring complete cultural assimilation. Even in the outposts of the Empire a St. Andrew's would be built across the road from St. George's.

The Kirk also encountered a new paradox in the middle decades of the twentieth century when the break-up of the British Empire coincided with the increasing secularisation of society. It discovered that its success in reuniting all but a few fragments of Scots Presbyterianism was far less significant than it had hoped. A few echoes are still heard of the mingled triumphalism and self-satisfaction with which the Kirk, and probably most of Scotland, celebrated the reunion of 1929. That was when the present Church of Scotland incorporated both the old 'establishment' tradition and that created by ancient secessions and the great Disruption of 1843 which had been provoked by arguments about State interference.

The formula for a completely independent Church with a recognised national status and civic role has worked well enough and could still be relevant to the eventual relationship of the Church of England to the State. But it has not proved an especially effective formula for national mission or even sustaining the traditional parish system.

In 1929 the Kirk thought that by being 'established and free' at the same time it was having the best of both worlds. In an age when religion often seems a backwater of the main currents of social and intellectual life it may wonder if it now gets the worst of both. It is still suspect to radicals who want to denounce all 'privilege' and all kinds of establishment, ecclesiastical and otherwise; and the activities, even hyper-activity, of leftish Church committees and offshoots like the Iona Community seem to make little difference. The main body of the Kirk blends the caution, even the torpor, which established institutions are prone to with a non-political conservatism inherent in Presbyterianism's mixture of oligarchy with some democratic elements It is relatively easy for political, ultra-ecumenical, anti-racist, enthusiasts to capture the voice of the Kirk, immeasurably more difficult for them to change the mind or the law of the Kirk.

Yet one result of the 1929 compromise was that the Scottish Church retained the pleasant dignities and territorial responsibilities of establishment but accepted the unpleasant realities of freedom, especially the financial ones. Almost all its expenses — including those of maintaining a parish system in Scotland's great areas of sparse or remote population — fall on a slowly shrinking and ageing core of the Kirk. Virtually all the experiments in seeking a less middle-class image, as well as the extra costs of Highlands and Islands, depend on the ability of the larger and mainly suburban parishes to keep national Church income ahead of inflation. Only in recent years has some State or other public aid been available for the maintenance and restoration of any but a select handful of historic churches, of which Scotland has more than is sometimes admitted. But many fine church buildings have been lost — some because Scotland inherited too many kirks from the days of Presbyterian schism, some because much of the best Victorian church architecture is in areas of

declining population, and some because the best buildings may not be the easiest to maintain.

One of the ironies of the contemporary Protestant Church situation in Europe is that countries with poorer church attendance than Scotland (but more money available from nominal adherents) make a far better show of maintaining the visible heritage of the Christian past. See not only the Protestant share of the great German churches but the simple country churches of Scandinavia.

Some of these Scots problems would tax the capacity even of a Church with German resources and the enthusiasm of the American South. When one of the most eminent of Southerners, Billy Graham, came over to help last year he did not find revival coming easily and left some uncertainty about the permanent impact on the Church, and especially on the Church of Scotland, of the thousands he persuaded to 'come forward'. Although the American evangelist had a lukewarm official blessing from the Kirk (and even a *nihil obstat* from the Roman Catholic hierarchy) his considerable public impact and enthusiastic welcome from many people in the Church of Scotland inevitably if inadvertently emphasised the extent to which the national Church is an uneasy coalition of elements which sometimes find more in common with people in other denominations than each other.

The 'fundamentalist takeover' which liberals profess to fear and which conservative evangelicals hope for, even if they use a different terminology, is not a threat of an ecclesiastical revolution but a trend towards a different balance of power and influence within the coalition. The main reason for it is that by and large evangelical congregations have held their ground better at a time when the Church has been in retreat. This is not immediately evident in most Church statistics, but it has been obvious in patterns of recruitment to the ministry. The evangelical minority in a Kirk dominated for most of this century by theological liberals has been finding a disproportionate share of new recruits for the ministry.

That has already brought some local tensions, perhaps hinting at more widespread problems to come, where easy-going congregations have had to adjust to what according to taste may be called either a new dogmatism or a firmer Biblical Christianty. It has also, even if the clouds are no bigger than a man's hand, brought the risk of storms in areas where the outlook seemed settled. In one of them, women's ordination, most of the Church of Scotland, including the majority of its evangelicals, would still reckon that the timely acceptance of women to the ministry and eldership on equal terms with men was one of the achievements of a Church with troubles enough elsewhere. That decision spared the Kirk the wrangles which the Church of England has more recently encountered and, having been taken in the 1960s before the emergence of militant femininism, it allowed the changes to have an evolutionary influence and not a revolutionary impact.

However, the growth of evangelical influence in liberal-dominated Scots Presbyterianism, at a time when Scots could scarcely help overhearing the

heated arguments South of the Border about women's ordination, has given the Kirk a problem of 'conscientious objection' among a handful of ultra-evangelicals. They have also been encouraged by the apparent readiness of Irish Presbyterians (who ordain women but whose theological conservatives are much more powerful) to find a constitutional formula to safeguard the tender consciences of ministers who do not want to be involved in the ordination of women. Sooner or later the Kirk will face the test case it has so far managed to avoid. For some earnest young enthusiast will plead that (in Martin Luther's words) his conscience is captive to the Word of God as set out through the advice of St. Paul — and at odds with the statutes of the Kirk's General Assembly.

There is another problem of conscientious objection which, although involving an even smaller minority of evangelicals, may raise even deeper theological problems about the range of comprehensiveness possible in a 'national' Church or in one of the Calvinist Reformed tradition. In the last twenty years or so there has been a trickle of Church legal cases provoked by ministers (or in one case an elder) who have decided that the tradition and practice of infant baptism are at odds with their interpretation of Scripture. Many more of their colleagues worry about the niceties of whether and when to baptise (or not) when approached by parents with no Church adherence, and even some of those with doubts about infant baptism keep their heads down and stay out of trouble. A few others slip over quietly to the Baptists. But the handful of objectors who remain, to risk trouble or even court it, threatens a problem out of all proportion to its numbers. The objectors are beginning to cite precedents among other Reformed Churches which have wavered or compromised on keeping infant baptism as the norm — in France, Italy, and even (in limited and special situations caused by incorporation of a very small denomination) in the United Reformed Church which now incorporates English Presbyterians. This is discomfiting for a Kirk which has always taken as much pride in its international connections as its national character.

Such arguments may seem remote from the realities of seeking a role for a national Church in a society where a very large proportion of the population are never baptised at any age, and where many people would not realise there were women ministers unless they encountered one taking a funeral service. But national religious traditions can be unexpectedly tenacious, even when sustained by far smaller minorities than the Scots Kirk can muster for its ministrations and disputations today. Events in even smaller countries than Scotland — such as Estonia and Latvia — or in much bigger ones, such as Russia and Ukraine, may even have their relevance in assessing the real depth of the religious recession in the very different conditions of Western Europe.

Churches which seemed to be withering away have revived dramatically with changes in circumstances. And Churches in countries where religion appeared long ago to have lost much of its influence and significance — the Scandinavian countries, even France — have shown at least enough

resilience to survive in what seemed unpropitious circumstances.

What makes the Scottish situation most obviously distinctive is the unusual identification between a dominant religious tradition and a nationality without statehood, and the apparent decline of the religious tradition at the same time as the reassertion of a national identity.

At first sight that situation may seem inexplicable, or lend itself to spurious explanations, such as the claim sometimes heard among Scottish Nationalists that the Kirk is paying for failing to identify itself wholeheartedly with the political movement for independence. But two factors are easily overlooked. The first is that until well into the twentieth century, and encouraged by the euphoria of the 1929 reunion, the Kirk took for granted a role in Scottish national life which had been eroded in Western countries with more pluralist or anti-clerical traditions. It was taken aback by the speed and impact of some of the changes in Scottish attitudes. Hence, for example, the paradox that Sunday shopping became common in once-sabbatarian Scotland (where the day of rest had been kept by custom rather than enforced by law) before it was attempted in the English supermarkets.

The second is that in the nineteenth century Scots Presbyterianism accepted much of the ethos of 'voluntary' or free churches elsewhere in the English-speaking world, with their emphasis on opting-in by 'profession of faith' and (on a more worldly plane) by 'freewill' financial commitment. Now it may wryly wonder if there is something to be said for national Churches that it may be too easy to belong to, after a fashion, and rather hard to opt out of. Its numerical decline, which for demographic reasons cannot readily be halted, may exaggerate its real loss of spiritual strength, and may even conceal symptoms of revival. But it brings the possibility that the surviving and even reviving Kirk may lack the numbers and range of influence to re-establish contact with a vast sector of Scotland's population which is only nominally Protestant.

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[R. D. Kernohan was editor of the Church of Scotland's journal *Life and Work* from 1972 to 1990.]

# THE NEW OLD PEOPLE

## by Lynne Patrick

IN 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue, extending horizons and pushing out the frontiers of contemporary knowledge. Columbus and others like him discovered a Shangri-la: farmland; wild animals whose fur was prized back home; silver, gold, precious stones. And Indians: over 700 tribes of them, part of the north American continent for thousands of years. So was born a Hollywood legend. The Indian was cast as the bad guy, the destructive force; for two hundred years the white man was the great saviour of the savage lands, bringing peace and civilisation and all the trappings of both. We all conveniently chose to forget the salient truth: the Indian was there first.

Senator Ernest Mike, a senior elder among the Cree Indians of Western Canada, is sadly philosophical about the legacy of that time:

> When you tell a man everything he lives by is primitive and uncouth, you destroy his faith in himself. When you take children away from their home, and teach them a religion which says the opposite to their people's tradition, you cut the ground from under that people's feet. It shouldn't be a surprise that Indians turned to alcohol, and rejected the white man's schooling once they were given the choice.

Senator Mike was one of many Indians — or native Americans, or aboriginals: they don't much mind what they're called — whom I met last summer, on a visit to Canada and the USA. After an interregnum of confusion and low self-image, a sense of racial identity is returning, along with a regeneration of ancient customs, crafts and beliefs. But in Canada especially, a huge percentage live on state welfare handouts. Natural pride is sending them in search of new means to pay their own way.

The Indian of old was resourceful: he lived off the land and used what was there. And in the late 20th century, what is there is tourism. Given the Western world's thirst for the unknown, the market is there for the tapping. Indian history is picturesque, Indian traditions colourful, with just enough mystique to add spice.

The pow-wow, for instance, bombards the eye with colour and the ear with strange sounds. It has evolved from the social gathering of old into a competitive dance festival. Dedicated pow-wow dancers — and there are many — can travel to a new venue every weekend of the summer, don their brilliantly feathered costumes and perform to live drum-and-mouth music. Ice cream vans jostle with ramshackle sheds selling buffalo stew, balloon sellers with beadworkers. The atmosphere is both relaxed and electric; the potential for exploitation enormous. But for the moment, at least, a minimum of commercial sophistry is visible. The events are widely advertised and no-one is excluded. But brown skins and long hair outnumber pale faces and short crops by a hundred to one. Not, give or take a suntan and an Asian slant to the eyes, that there is much difference to the untutored eye: these days Indian everyday summer costume is shorts and tee-shirts. Melvin Isnana is Chief of Standing Buffalo Dakota Reserve in the Qu'Appelle Valley, Saskatchewan. Their annual

pow-wow takes place the second Saturday in August. He joined the Grand Entry parade in the late afternoon, a little incongruous in jeans and a light shirt which could have come from Marks and Spencer, and a trailing eagle-feather headdress, his badge of seniority for ceremonial occasions. 'The eagle feather,' he told us, 'has an immense spiritual significance. To be allowed to wear one is a sign of achievement.' When an eagle feather shook loose from a dancer's costume and fluttered to the ground, the dance came to a halt and silence fell. We were asked to put our cameras away while prayers were said and atonement made for the insult to the spirit of the great bird.

So the white man exploring the regeneration of Indian tradition has to tread softly, lest he trample on a long-buried and newly fragile creed. A spark of the Great Spirit lives in all things, sentient and inanimate; even the showing of a peace pipe or a hunting knife in a museum can be construed as an insult to it. Dr. Margaret Hanna, curator at the Museum of Natural History in Regina, Saskatchewan's provincial capital, is setting up a new First People's Gallery, charting the history of the Indian in the province. She consults native elders at every stage, offering traditional gifts and following their advice to avoid giving offence.

A hundred miles away, just outside Saskatoon, the province's other major city, lies the best example of white-Indian co-operation I encountered during my journey of discovery. Wanuskewin — the name means 'living in harmony' — was for centuries a place of meeting, worship and celebration for several tribes. In recent years it has become a rich archeological site, and a vivid, detailed picture of local and tribal history has been constructed from the finds. A unique heritage centre will open in 1992. The planning committee consists of white academics and Indian elders in roughly equal numbers, and the Indian contingent has the last word on all matters pertaining to tradition. Vance McNabb, the head tour guide designate, is a highly qualified archaeologist and full-blooded Indian. The restaurant and gift shop will be solely Indian.

Wanuskewin is surrounded by a blanket of peace. The native elders talk of using it as a means of educating young Indians who have lost touch with their roots, as well as offering white visitors an insight into their past. They speak quietly, but with authority, about the modern as well as the ancient world. Now they have explored their ancestors' creed, they cannot understand how the world has lost its way and created pollution, global warming and the other environmental disasters which lie in wait for us. 'The earth is our mum,' said one bemused man. 'How can you poison and damage your mum?' Their naivety is touching; but perhaps it points a route the world should have followed.

Elsewhere in Canada past frictions have resulted in less consideration given to newly tender sensibilities. Winnipeg, Manitoba, has a large population of urban Indians as a result of legislation in the 1950s which was designed to abolish the reserves and bring about 'integration'. It failed — most Indians still live on reserves and prefer it that way; but inner city ghetto areas grew up as a consequence. Winnipeg natives still have a poor image; the noble savage on horseback has given way to the

aggressive layabout with a knife.

It is hardly surprising that lines of communication are not good. The Museum of Man and Nature devotes half a floor to native history. There are stuffed animals, glass cases full of artefacts and costumes, a huge diorama of life in the forest — and little thought given to how the natives themselves feel about being put on display. Art Shofley is a Chipewyan political leader, president of the Aboriginal Cultural Society in Winnipeg and champion pow-wow dancer. 'I can't let myself be hurt any more when the white man walks all over our dreams,' he says.

On the southern edge of Manitoba, a couple of hours drive from Winnipeg, a quirk of nature has placed a sand dune in the middle of a forest. Nowadays known as Spirit Sands, it is a well-marketed tourist attraction. Families and school parties follow a hearty young guide who describes the vegetation in reverent detail and tosses in the odd Indian legend as an aside. Spirit Sands was once the most holy place in Manitoba for native Americans. A tight-lipped Art Shofley denied any knowledge of it, and changed the subject.

In the United States, Indians have marketed their culture to tourists for many years. Turtle Mountain, North Dakota, is a Chipewa reservation an hour's drive from Spirit Sands and just south of the border between Canada and the USA. It sets out its stall for visitors, but still retains a spiritual calmness. The Turtle Mountain Historical Society runs a thriving craft shop, heritage centre and archive service which generate a six-figure income. Children in the well-equipped high school in Belcourt learn their own history by painting it into murals. There are rodeos and pow-wows throughout the summer, and visitors receive a warm welcome.

Christianity and Indian spiritual values have met each other halfway at Anishinabaug, a short drive from Belcourt. This tree-studded, lakeside haven was originally set up as a children's summer camp, and now operates all the year round as a retreat for people of all ages. A taste of 'real' Indian life is here for the taking. Traditional Chipewan buildings including a birchbark wigwam and willow-boughed sweat lodge — a kind of sauna for the soul as well as the body — form part of the decor. Alta Bruce and her band of helpers cook wild rice with onion and mushroom for supper. The sleeping accommodation includes tipees with real buffalo hide mats, and an earthlodge with log beds, as well as more conventional wooden cabins. And here, as in Wanuskewin, peace envelops everything.

The same sense of tranquillity pervades Knife River, half an hour's drive from Bismarck, North Dakota's state capital. Here white and Indian join forces each August to present 'Lewis and Clark Among the Earthlodge People', a dramatised sliver of local history set against a background of everyday village life 150 years ago. Local children and adults dress in moose hide costumes from the museum; they erect the buffalo hide tipees, set strips of meat to dry over a smoky fire and invite the public to pay its five dollars. The advertising is as amateurish as the acting, but audiences fill the portable grandstand for four nights, and the ambience is warm. Drum and flute music pervade the sunlit clearing; and the deep spirituality

which underpins all things Indian casts its spell over the evening.

Bismarck is the venue for the United Tribes Art Expo, an annual event providing a showcase for native artists. Beadwork, quilling, jewellery and leather are on display beside paintings and sculpture from all over North America. Here Mary Lee from Saskatchewan, who smoke-tans her own moose hide and works it into gloves, moccassins and waistcoats, shows her wares alongside May Louise Campbell, a Meti descended from the Scottish fur traders. Her speciality is dolls, collectors' pieces, with old-lady faces moulded from red clay. She stitches every garment by hand; takes endless pains to craft each fingernail. They are the antiques of tomorrow.

At home in Winnipeg, May Louise supplies an Indian craft shop with jewellery and 'dream catchers', traditional mojos to chase away nightmares; they are quick to produce, and she needs to earn a living.

Elsewhere in North America the Indian has learned to be even more streetwise. On Red Lake reservation in northern Minnesota a Chipewa called Frank Michaud owns the Northern Lights chain of casinos. They are clean and well run, smaller than their Las Vegas counterparts but less sleazy. The croupiers and barmen are Indian. Gambling is banned on non-reservation land everywhere else in the state. Frank Michaud is a rich man, and Red Lake reservation thrives. At Cass Lake, on the same reservation, a small specialist food company has grown out of the native way of life. Harvesting the gourmet's delight, wild rice, which grows in the Minnesota lakes has been part of the Chipewan tradition for centuries; so has the whitefish which lives in the same water. Ojibwe Foods Company sells both, together with natural maple syrup and a selection of wild berry jellies, to upmarket food outlets all over America. The company employs only Indians, and uses traditional preparation methods. It is thriving.

Not so the people of White Earth, another Chipewan reservation a hundred miles away. Their wild rice industry has been overtaken by huge paddy farms just outside the reservation, producing a form of wild rice at a fraction of the cost of the real thing. Attempts to find a 'niche' market for their genuine, hand-harvested product constantly fall on stony ground. There is 80 per cent unemployment in White Earth, and the average age of the population is rising as the young people leave for the city. Individuals as well as communities fall victim to market forces. Lewis Webster is a flute maker; his exquisite works of art are delicately carved from redwood and cedar, polished and decorated, tested for purity of tone at every stage. Each one absorbs a painstaking three days of work; yet they retail at a mere $60 in gift shops. Lewis Webster is philosophical. 'I make enough to live on. And I have my music.'

Tapping the growing tourist industry is one way out of the poverty trap for America's original natives; but there is a real danger that something precious will be damaged along the way. To us the feathers, the dancing, the tipee, the ceremonies are a picturesque form of entertainment. To them the significance is deeper, seminal to the sense of the world's intrinsic spirituality they are trying to resurrect.

# 'ONE HUGE AND COMPLEX EPISODE': THE DIARY OF C. S. LEWIS

## by Ann Bonsor

'IF Theism had done nothing else for me, I should still be thankful that it cured me of the time-wasting and foolish practice of keeping a diary' wrote C. S. Lewis in 1955. This is an interesting and not altogether unexpected statement when one considers Lewis's complicated and secretive personality, and although it is true that the 'huge and complex episode' he refers to in his autobiography *Surprised by Joy* almost certainly concerns his relationship with Mrs. Moore, one might say the phrase describes as well as any other the extraordinary contradictions and complexities of C. S. Lewis's whole life — itself a huge and complex episode indeed.

C. S. Lewis's Diary for the years 1922-1927 has now been ably and compendiously edited by Walter Hooper and entitled *All my road before me* (Harper Collins). In it we are given information we would certainly not otherwise have had of Lewis's attitudes, prejudices and opinions on a variety of subjects and about a considerable number of people. Above all we discover what at the time almost no one, not even his closest friends were aware of, how those years were, one might say obsessively, concerned with Mrs. Janie Moore, a woman 27 years older than 'Jack' Lewis, who was himself a mere nine years older than Maureen, Mrs. Moore's only daughter. Mrs. Moore was the mother of a close friend and fellow officer of Lewis's who was killed in the First World War. Lewis remained faithful to his promise to look after Mrs. Moore, who had separated from her husband in Ireland. It was Maureen who completed that curious little household which has so puzzled and fascinated Lewis's many biographers, admirers and critics. Some years ago Maureen, now Lady Dunbar of Hempriggs, said to me whilst discussing the impact made upon the young Jack Lewis by the death of his mother when he was only nine years old: 'And that was where my mother came in'.

Referred to as she is in Lewis's Diary as 'D', Mrs. Moore most probably should be regarded primarily as a mother-figure, but what a mother-figure the young intellectually aggressive, yet emotionally naive C. S. Lewis met when he was only 18 years old!

It was Lewis's nature to be critical in the view he took of people, of men, and especially of women. He was intolerant and dismissive of anybody and almost everybody with whom he came in contact. His attitude to and relationship with his own father is ambivalent to say the least; love/hate is the psychological cliché that has been used to describe it; and this even though Albert Lewis seems from Jack's own descriptions of his dealings with his father, to have been generous and conciliatory in his efforts to remain on terms with a son who can only have appeared to him as wayward, secretive and difficult, even if academically brilliant.

How then can we account for the infinite patience, understanding and

sympathy that Lewis so consistently demonstrated in almost everything that he wrote between the age of 23 and 28 about Mrs. Janie Moore?

She appears at the best to have been not very intelligent. She seems to have had distinctly hypochondriacal tendencies. She was also a convinced workaholic and a bossy and difficult woman. Mrs. Moore must have been exceedingly awkward to live with — and yet Lewis not only lived with her, but from the age of 23 he supported her, cherished her, and hardly ever did more than evince the mildest exasperation or displeasure at her autocratic treatment of him. (It must be remembered, of course, that the diary was written, partly at least, at her instigation, and that she had access to it. Often the two of them read the latest entries together.)

For us to read C. S. Lewis's Diary from a domestic point of view is to be regaled with a catalogue of his chores. These ranged from scraping turnips to putting up curtains, laying linoleum, going to the shops, mowing the grass, doing endless washing-up, and very, very often indeed, ministering to 'D', suffering from one of her headaches, migraines, fits of indigestion or colds in the head. Through these years and in spite of distractions which included acting as father rather than brother to Maureen, interviewing her music teachers, watching school plays and taking her to concerts, Lewis was also occupied in getting a First in Greats in 1923 and a First in English in 1924. He was as well exceedingly active in various university debating clubs and societies, and immersed in the writing of *Dymer* — an epic poem of which one reader to whom it was sent remarked: 'The metrical level is good, the vocabulary is large, but Poetry — not a line'. *Dymer* was, in fact published in 1926, and maybe the best that can be said for it is that very little has ever been said. Lewis is not a poet, hard though he worked to become one; although it is fair to remark that he did write a handful of pleasant and sometimes moving verses — *The Apologist's Evening Prayer* being one that must rank high by any rating:

> From all my lame defeats and oh! much more
> From all the victories that I seemed to score;
> From cleverness shot forth on Thy behalf
> At which, while angels weep, the audience laugh;
> From all my proofs of Thy divinity,
> Thou, who wouldst give no sign, deliver me.
>
> Thoughts are but coins. Let me not trust, instead
> Of Thee, their thin-worn image of Thy head.
> From all my thoughts, even my thoughts of Thee,
> O Thou fair Silence, fall, and set me free.
> Lord of the narrow gate and needle's eye,
> Take from me all my trumpery lest I die.

'Trumpery' is not a word that springs to mind when considering C. S. Lewis: scholar, man-of-letters, Christian-apologist and creator of Narnia;

and it is interesting to read in his Diary not only of his strong personal antipathies and prejudices but also of his intellectual and literary judgements as these developed during those five to six incredibly formative years between 1922 and 1927.

C. S. Lewis read prodigiously throughout his whole life and in his Diary he records what he is reading and how it strikes him. 'Gusto' is a word that has been used about his attitude to almost everything and it was with gusto that Lewis read omniverously, dealt with his pupils at Magdalen, and at University College before that, and argued with his colleagues and his friends; 'argued to win' as it has also been remarked; and in groups such as the Martlets, the Coalbitars, and above all in his own creation, the Inklings, argument, discussion and critical evaluation continued as a driving force throughout his life.

C. S. Lewis was combative in his twenties and remained combative in his fifties and sixties. By temperament and by training he relished what, referring to his treatment of pupils in tutorials, Professor John Wain has called 'The Socratic approach in Spades' — and no undergraduate who was taught by Lewis or attended his lectures could possibly have regarded him as other than brusque, scholarly, direct and straight-forward. Of him one might have supposed 'le style, c'est l'homme même', and in many aspects it was; but not in all. For Lewis was secretive to the point of being, in his private life, downright deceitful; and whilst 'economy with the truth' has become in these days a phrase somewhat overworked, Jack Lewis in his Diary and in his life was frequently more (or is it less?) than economic. He often abandoned truth entirely for falsehood.

This is especially the case in his dealings with his father, and it is not surprising that Albert Lewis, and Jack's elder brother, Warnie, worried about the relationship with Mrs. Moore, Albert finding the situation in Oxford, or what he knew of it 'uncomfortable', and Warnie calling it 'freakish'.

I am not sure how much is to be gained by attempting to add to the discussion about Mrs. Moore's and Jack's sexual relationship, if indeed there was one. Probability must be that for some years, at least, it was not for nothing that Maureen was packed off to church on Sunday mornings and was not accompanied by her mother. What is perhaps more interesting than this however, is the sheer dependence revealed by Jack in his need for and total acceptance of a situation which would have been intolerable for most people; a dependence upon Janie Moore that presumably gave him a stability he might not otherwise have known, but for which he paid a heavy price. For some years at least Jack Lewis seems to have needed the emotional support of a woman 27 years older than he For many more years a more mature C. S. Lewis had the still greater responsibility of a domineering and demanding woman who depended in her physical and mental decrepitude upon him. He did indeed look after her stoically and constantly until she died at the age of 78, and it may or may not be relevant that for approximately 25 of their 31 year relationship Lewis was a Christian. No one who reads his Diary or has read

*Surprised by Joy* need be surprised if his conversion in 1929 brought about certain changes of attitude and behaviour to many aspects of C. S. Lewis's life, changes which Janie Moore herself may not have appreciated.

The diarist in Lewis has long been supplanted and the poet and perhaps mystic has found his place. In the latest of his many services to Lewis scholarship, Walter Hooper has shown us the daily life and frustrations of the young Lewis who would develop into one of the great Christian writers of our time.

If C. S. Lewis did change in certain fundamentals as his life progressed many of his earlier interests and pleasures never altered. As we discover in the Diary he always loved walking, and walked considerable distances most days, whether during term or vacation, and whether in and around Oxford or further afield. He had a deep feeling for nature and a sense of natural beauty, though this, one gathers, did not result in later years in his acquiring much of an aesthetic appreciation indoors or at home. He had, when young, to be careful with money. As he grew older he continued to be just as careful. It was reported many years later that when paper began to peel from the walls at 'The Kilns', his house in Headington, the offending strips were torn off but not replaced! Parsimony ruled, according to, amongst others, the late Fred Paxford, the gardener and handyman who worked for Lewis from the early 1930s until the latters death in 1963. To offset this miserliness it must be added that Lewis was immensely generous with the royalties from his books, and contributed lavishly to charities of many sorts.

'The things I assert most vigourously are those that I resisted long and accepted late.' C. S. Lewis made this revealing comment about himself in *Surprised by Joy*, and it is interesting, as we study the older Lewis in relation to the younger man who wrote the Diary, to see just how true that statement is. It is certain that Lewis did nothing by halves. He lived with intensity; he worked with a single-minded concentration, he admired whole-heartedly and disliked with ferocity. Of those aspects of life for which he had no time he was ruthlessly dismissive. In his later years he read no newspapers, listened to no radio, had probably not heard of television. If there was to be a war someone he was sure would tell him about it! How can we admire, and perhaps we do not, such insulated self-sufficiency?

Joy Gresham, *nee Davidman*, certainly did, and her entry into Lewis's life and to The Kilns during the early 1950s was catalystic, if not, from some points of view, catastrophic. The story of her relationship with Jack has in it something of legend and perhaps something of farce and has been much speculated about and sometimes over-romanticized (e.g. Bill Nicholson's play *Shadowlands*). Not many of those who were allowed to meet Joy seem to have liked her; some of Lewis's closest friends scarcely knew of her existence until the two of them had married. Once again Lewis had more or less secretly acquired dependants, a wife and two stepsons — and once again Warnie, the loyal and devoted but alcoholic brother was forced into third place in a house which he had hitherto shared

with Jack.

History throughout C. S. Lewis's life, if not repeating itself, does seem to achieve a certain regularity of pattern, and this pattern starts to emerge during his earliest years at Oxford. That his relationship with Mrs. Moore gave him stability we cannot doubt, and that his marriage to Joy Davidman was a source of enrichment and fulfilment is also not in question. The courage with which Joy herself, and Jack, faced and endured her long and dreadful illness, and the fortitude Lewis managed to acquire after Joy's death and also during his own painful and protracted physical decline, — all this impresses and indeed moves us.

How then are we to sum up this remarkable man's remarkable life and his no less remarkable literary achievement? C. S. Lewis it must be emphasized has been a force to be reckoned with since *The Allegory of Love* was published in 1936, the *Preface to Paradise Lost* in 1941 and *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* in 1954, as well as the countless other essays, articles and reviews on an immensely wide range of subjects.

Outside academic circles I suppose Lewis is better known for his popular and religious writings such as *The Screwtape Letters*, and for his Christian-orientated science-fiction novels, *Perelandra* and the others. For more people still it will be the Narnia books beginning with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* that have helped to make him not only famous but also a cult-figure in the USA. One could add to this list and mention later and specifically religious works such as *Letters to Malcolm Chiefly on Prayer, The Four Loves,* and *A Grief Observed* amongst many others, but there is no need. The point that has to be stressed is that C. S. Lewis, against a background of more or less complicated domestic circumstances, remained constant throughout his life to his quest for Joy — a spiritual Joy that he mentions frequently in his early Diary, that he defines in *Surprised by Joy* and many of his other writings, and that was for him 'the stab, the pang, the inconsolable longing'. Joy in the sense of mystery, of splendour and of glory, — a Christian Joy, after C. S. Lewis's conversion, which he described as 'brightness, splendour, luminosity', when he told his listeners, in an address given in The University Church in Oxford as early as 1941: 'We are to shine as the sun, we are to be given the Morning Star.'

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[Ann Bonsor wrote the BBC Radio Four documentary about C. S. Lewis, which drew on her many interviews with his friends and associates.]

# AFTER THE REQUIEM — A PERSONAL VIEW OF MOZART'S BICENTENARY

## by Iwo and Pamela Zaluski

OVER the past two years we have celebrated the bicentenary of Mozart's death by retracing, with the help of two good road maps, one modern and one circa 1760, this extraordinary man's journey. Our trips took us not only to Vienna and Salzburg, but also to Prague, Berlin, Rome, Naples, Venice, Paris, the Hague — and London. We looked for ghosts — and found them. Last December it seemed fitting to close the chapter by recreating his final, and perhaps best known journey to his anonymous resting place, around which two hundred years have woven so much mystery.

Like the other journeys, it was intended as a personal odyssey: to be at the site of the house in Rauhensteingasse in Vienna at the actual moment of the bicentenary at 12.55 on the morning of December 5th.

The past year has been bursting with homage and hype; fine performances of Mozart's music have alternated with banalities and — worse — blatant untruths based on legend and pure fantasy. Mentally armed against hype, we set off in search of Mozart's ghost in the cities that mattered most, and the end of November saw us in Vienna.

The splendid capital of Imperial Austria was unkind to Mozart. The musical Establishment, with Antonio Salieri in the driving seat, reigned supreme, and wielded enough power to tell Emperor Joseph II what to think and which music to like. The Court looked to Italy for its music and culture.

Emperor Joseph II enjoyed a good tune as well as the next man, and the Italians, with their gift for melody, came up trumps every time on that score; but Joseph reckoned the time had come for German music and opera, generally dismissed as inferior, to be put on the map. However, Joseph liked Mozart, and saw in him the German revival of his dreams.

The Emperor made do with attending Mozart's concerts, at which he was given to waving his hat and shouting 'Bravo Mozart!' and walking out after Mozart had finished his bit, while the Italian set smiled wryly, knowing that in musical matters the Emperor himself was not part of the Establishment. So the upwardly mobile continued to patronise all things Italian, and treated Mozart as a second best, even if they did eulogise about him in the privacy of their homes.

Last year, Vienna was in the throes of atonement for her past neglect. Mozart was presented in every possible way. Chocolates, cakes, tours and even a liqueur called Amadeus complemented the operas, concerts and masses as pale pilsner complements a good sausage with mustard. On the Saturday night the 'gemütlich' subterranean Augustiner Beer Cellar featured just that; merry ländler on violin and accordeon accompanied excellent 'wurst', greasy pork, sauerkraut and frothy beer. Perfect until they broke into Papageno's aria from the *Magic Flute*. If they had to do

Mozart, they should have stuck to the 'oompah' German dances that he turned out for Joseph's successor, Leopold II; he only just tolerated the Mozart sound, while his Empress, Maria Luisa referred to his opera, *La Clemenza di Tito* as 'German swinery!'.

Sunday morning we attended High Mass at the Burgkappelle at which the Vienna Boys' Choir sang Mozart's *Coronation Mass in C*, K317. The intimate, Gothic chapel was perfect for this small-scale work, and the angelic voices of the finest boys' choir in the world wove a very moving and spiritual spell.

The real Mozart city is Prague, perhaps Europe's most beautiful capital. Mozart adored it, and the Praguers adored Mozart. They still do, and the Bohemian capital was swamped with hype beyond belief, even though most of it came straight from the heart. The Bohemian tradition for stage-craft is legendary, and no device was too outrageous for the expression of their homage. True, we were unable to get tickets for the Gala Premiere of *Don Giovanni* at the Estates Theatre, but that was understandable. *Don Giovanni* first saw the light at the Estates Theatre in 1787 to great acclaim. This small but magnificent theatre, which under the Communists had been renamed the Tyl Theatre, has just been superbly restored, and has reverted to its old name.

Posters advertised a Mozart chamber concert on the Saturday night at the Bertramka, the Duseks' house on the outskirts of the city, where Mozart spent so much time. The delightful, rebuilt house, set in a spacious garden, is now Prague's Mozart museum. The concert was advertised for eight o'clock, but we arrived to find a notice saying, 'Concert cancelled due to technical reasons'.

The technical reasons, explained the bemused curator, were that the concert had taken place, for some Kafkaesque reason, at five o'clock. The curator apologised, suggesting that we should 'visit our beautiful city, have a beer, or walk by the Vltava . . .'.

The following two nights, we attended Mozart operas—with a difference.

The first was *Figaro. Figaro!* a new Prague version of *The Marriage of Figaro*, at the Smetana Museum. This was a small-scale, chamber version which owed a considerable debt to pantomime, Black Theatre, puppetry, mime, lighting, special effects and an overdose of youthful exuberance, all of which produced two hours of pure enchantment. Every scene produced new visual delights, and Susanna was a joy to both ear and eye. The young company's ingenuity was boundless; we were especially amused by Figaro, who sang one of his arias while giving the text in deaf and dumb sign language — perhaps to counteract the gently swishing sound of a waterfall on the River Vltava outside!

Equally ingenious was the National Marionette Theatre's version of *Don Giovanni*, in which the whimsy was more restrained, since the production emulated traditional opera. Special effects were saved for the last act, when the Statue, played by a person in costume, blundered, like Godzilla, onto the small stage, while the fires of hell glowed behind clouds of dry ice.

The characterisations, as one would expect from the Czechs, were brilliant and sophisticated. This was no children's Christmas show. In the hands of the puppeteers, highly trained artists in their own right, the characters truly came to life. Just watching their hand movements was like watching a ballet, in which the fingers themselves danced, moving effortlessly, even passing the puppets from person to person without impairing the smooth action on the stage.

The production was upstaged by the conductor, a whimsical, dotty period character with a passing resemblance to Mozart. Operated by two sticks held from below, his antics during scene changes delighted the audience, as he lost himself in reams of music and got tipsy on a glass of wine.

On the Sunday we attended High Mass at the breathtakingly beautiful Strachov Monastery Church, where Mozart improvised on the organ. Fifty bars of this music were hurriedly jotted down by a Fr. Norbert Lehmann before the latter was interrupted, and the rest of Mozart's ramble remains lost to posterity.

Our hotel, the splendid new 'Diplomat', even had a boutique purveying exclusively Mozartiana: watches, umbrellas, miniature violins, alarm clocks, musical boxes and CDs. That afternoon we took Mozart cake and coffee in the hotel's coffee rooms, to the accompaniment of the 'Mozart String Quartet', which only played Moravian folk tunes. But the Mozart cake was excellent.

On December 4th we returned to Vienna, where the more sophisticated hype was in full swing, and the weather had turned colder. That evening we attended the real thing: a superb production of *Idomeneo* at the Opera. As one would expect from one of the world's premier opera houses, it was a memorable experience.

The bicentenary moment was approaching. Midnight passed and the chill began to bite. Wrapped up warmly, we made our way to Rauensteingasse. Today the site is occupied by Steffl's department store. Two years ago, Steffl's ran a small Mozart display on the top floor. Now we found it had closed down, but a replica of the façade of Mozart's house had been erected on the pavement outside. Candles flickered in the cold breeze. A dozen people were there, seated on benches on the other side of the narrow street. The sound of Mozart's music wafted through the icy night.

Behind the façade, in the derelict doorway, was the source of the music — a cassette player, with a candle and a carnation beside it. Three people were sheltering in the doorway, listening, silent and still. At about half-past-twelve the owner of the cassette player changed the cassette. The opening bars of the Requiem spilled into the darkness. Back in the road, the crowd had swelled to about three dozen, including a man in a wheelchair. An anorak hood lifted, and the lamplight caught an oriental face with tears in its eyes.

At 12.55, the moment of the bicentenary, the 'Lacrymosa' was aborted at the point where Mozart had stopped writing, leaving jottings and

instructions for his pupil Franz Süssmayr to finish. There were now about 50 people present, all with their own thoughts; everyone was there anonymously. For five minutes, we all stood or sat together — yet alone, like a club that met once only and for just the one purpose: to be there.

The tape started up again. The haunting 'Ave Verum'. We left at about 1.15, emotionally drained.

The next morning, December 5th, Vienna's first snowfall had dusted the rooftops. 'The 'Requiem', with the combined forces of the Vienna State Opera Chorus, the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, with soloists Arleen Auger, Cecilia Bartoli, Vinson Cole and Rene Pape, all under the baton of Sir Georg Solti, was to be given that evening at the magnificent, towering St. Stephen's Cathedral. Unable to get tickets, we watched and listened to the whole ceremony on the big screen outside, along with thousands stretching along the Christmas-lit Graben and Kärntnerstrasse as far as the eye could see; yet despite the superb performance and grand occasion, to us it seemed like an anti-climax. We made our way round to the Crucifix Chapel, the small vestibule where Mozart's funeral actually took place. It was lit up, but deserted, surrounded by the vans of the Media Circus.

Somewhere, someone had totally missed the point.

On December 6th, 1791, Mozart was taken to St. Marx's Cemetery, to be unceremoniously dumped in a communal grave. The recent findings by scientists that the controversial skull at the Vienna Natural History Museum is indeed that of Mozart makes sickening news. Did some ghoul hack off his head in the night, when all had gone?

A broken column and an angel, put in place by a gardener at the end of the 19th century as his personal homage to a great man, still mark the supposed grave. On Saturday, December 7th, snow lay on the silent cemetery, but the wreaths, flowers and candles spread on the grave were the only colour in an otherwise monochrome landscape.

It has been a moving odyssey, despite the hype and the homage; but it is good to know that as a result it is Mozart who, in the long run, has the last laugh.

# IN SEARCH OF TARKA THE OTTER

## by John Slader

IT was to the south-western peninsula that Henry Williamson came: he chose the remote countryside of the two rivers, the Taw and the Torridge. In 1927 he wrote his *Tarka the Otter*, one of the best loved of all nature stories. An award-winning novel it has run to over thirty editions. Translated into many languages including French, German, Russian and Swedish, it has become an international classic. A superb evocation of the wildlife and countryside of North Devon. It has kindled a passion for wildlife and wild places in countless readers.

We were on holiday. In the footsteps of Williamson. To the country of Tarka, an area of high landscape quality and natural beauty which he captured so vividly in his novel. The countryside of the two rivers is no longer so remote. Westward along the motorway we were soon approaching our hostelry beside the Taw. The 'Gentleman's River' Williamson called it for the inns of the Taw, unlike those of the Torridge, were so placed that the huntsmen could refresh themselves at luncheon.

The otter of course is no longer hunted. Only the angler can be found along the river. The otter however has declined in numbers as a result of modern farming methods and especially the use of poisonous pesticides. In Devon and the neighbouring county of Cornwall he appears to be 'holding his ŏwn'.

In the region of the two rivers and their estuary 'The Tarka Project' has been established. With the 'greening of our planet' there could not be a better time. Tourism and recreation is being promoted. Using the medium of Henry Williamson's novel, the character and natural beauty of this part of Devon can be explored, enjoyed and appreciated. Wildlife can be protected and enriched.

The river valleys are the heartland of Tarka country. Here Tarka was born and spent much of his life. A part of Devon which has changed least since the book was written. A vast area of largely unspoilt and quiet countryside. The two rivers joining as one with a wide estuary bounded by the mudflats of Braunton and Northam. Scattered villages and forest. The ports of Bideford and Barnstaple bring to mind its maritime heritage. Men of Devon were masters of the waves long ago. A Devon man established the first British colony. It was a Devon man who first sailed around the world in an English ship. Who has not heard of Drake and Raleigh, Davis, Gilbert and Grenville?

The hostelry beside the Taw was cosy and cottagey with its floor of Cornish slate in the bar. Cob walls and low ceilings enhance the soft rural ambience. Built during the 17th century the records of 'The Rising Sun' show the site has been inhabited since the 13th century. The inn owns three 'reaches' on the river where in the bumper season of 1980 ninety salmon were landed. You'll hear many tales of 'the one that got away'. Just try the lounge bar or the old 'snug'. Here you will also meet the Devon

farmer, a kindly race of men filled with a great pride of their fair county.

Some two hundred years ago, Charles Vancouver, employed by the government to make a report on farming wrote: 'There is an openness of heart and mildness of character in the inhabitants of Devonshire which probably is not to be excelled in any part of England. A general urbanity of manners and desire to please and meet the wishes of the stranger, prevail among all classes of the community'. No wonder Williamson, a Londoner by birth and who saw service in Flanders during the First World War, came to live in these parts.

The inhabitants have changed little. One can appreciate that no better than by the Torridge below Bideford. The quaint waterside village of Instow, a haven for sailing, water skiing and wind surfing. Pristine white with panoramic sea views, with birdlife sightings, with vistas of the estuary where Tarka travelled, is the Commodore. Privately owned and managed, the hotel offers local produce from farm, field, river and sea. Torridge salmon, Clovelly crab, Lynton lobsters, Fremington mussels, Tapely pheasant, Exmoor venison.

Across the river is the picturesque fishing village of Appledore where in Irsha Street, cottages back on to the water's edge; where in 'Galerie Marin' artists of ships and of the sea gather. At the Seamens Mission Chapel a 'Harvest of Land and Sea' was being held. In Market Street, bow-windowed cottages, the 'Globe House', originally an inn of some repute. Number 45 is dated 1745. In Meeting Street, so called because of the Ebenezer Baptist Church and the Independent Chapel of 1816, is 'The Champion of Wales', a seamen's 'pub' of notoriety in years past. Delicate colours of the estuary, the grey green of the Atlantic beyond, Braunton Pill and the Burrows to the eastward are matched by the colour-wash everywhere in the village.

Braunton Pill (an estural creek) is where in the 1920s the ketches and gravel barges were moored. Williamson writes of the brackish waters of the duckpond where the otters took mullet which had been washed in when the seawall had been broken years before: 'At night many kinds of wildfowl flapped and quacked besides the reeds: mallard, widgeon, teal, coot, dabchick and straps of the duck family — shoveller, pochard and goldeneye'.

Upstream, Bideford rises steeply from the west bank. Contrasting sharply with the new bridge linking the town with the motorway is the stone bridge seven centuries old. Here Williamson saw the otters swimming: 'The rumbling noises of traffic on the bridge were loud and figures were seen. In front, twenty-four arches, of different shapes and sizes bore the long bridge. Greymuzzle dived and the four followed her'.

The town owes a great deal to the Grenville family. Richard de Grenville made it a borough before 1217. Over three and a half centuries later, at the instance of Sir Richard Grenville, cousin of Raleigh and friend of Sir Francis Drake, Bideford received a charter of incorporation from Queen Elizabeth I. Sir Richard's colonisation of Virginia and Carolina in 1585 led to the establishment of the town's maritime heritage. For many

generations it was home to 'mast and yardsmen', the deep water sailors. For long the port was described as one of the best trading towns of England.

The Torridge is navigable to Weare Gifford (pronounced 'Jifford'). The 15th century manor house was built by the Fortescue family when they acquired the estate in 1454. Nearby the church of Landcross serves the smallest parish of Devon. It sits perched on a steep bank above a grand sweep of the river. The 'Pool of the Six Herons' lies beneath the black round iron pillars of the railway bridge. The railway is gone though the bridge remains. Like Williamson, we stayed awhile and listened — 'cries of ring plover and golden plover, of curlew, whimbrel, snipe and redshank'. 'The waters bore away the first coloured leaves of the year. Beeches preserved their tawny form in rain and hail, but yielded more and more to the winds. Sandmartins and warblers deserted their old haunts; kingfishers and herons remained. The reeds sighed in the songless days, the flags curled as they withered, and their brittle tops were broken by the rains'.

The wooded vale with much larch and oak is at its most beautiful. Near Canal Bridge is Owlery Holt where Tarka was born. The name is from the Celtic 'Ta' meaning 'wandering as water' or 'the little water wanderer'. A 'brock' (or badger) may be seen or sometimes a weasel (in Devon dialect, a 'vair'). Williamson uses many old West Country words: 'Ackymal' when referring to the blue tit or great tit; Ruddock, the robin, Crackey, the wren and fitchey or fitch, the stoat; 'pollywiggles', the tadpoles; the 'oolypuggers', meaning the great mace reed, commonly known as the bull-rush.

Sited upon a cliff rising from the meadows of the Torridge is the ancient borough of Torrington. With trees dipping to the waters edge the river twists and turns. Rothern Bridge, New Bridge and then Taddiport Bridge where the otters would hunt salmon in the pool below. Upstream with views of Dartmoor lie remote villages. Dolton's remarkable Saxon font in its ancient church is a wondrous possession for a modest village.

Tarka knew Barnstaple's sixteen-arch Long Bridge better than most. In England's oldest borough the countryside comes to town. In its Pannier market one can see fresh farm clotted cream, fruit, vegetables, lace, handwoven cloth, glassware and pottery. Its most notable citizen John Gay wrote that 1728 smash hit 'The Beggar's Opera'.

Upriver is Tawstock: a real piece of old England where the rich pastures slope to Taw's banks in the shade of chestnuts, oaks and copper beeches. The Bourchiers, Lords Fitzwarren and Earls of Bath. They were here from the 15th century for some 300 years. Just peep into their church with its remarkable collection of monuments to one of the most powerful families of their time.

In the Taw valley the river, road and railway run side by side. Now renamed the Tarka Line, the train links the land of the two rivers with the cathedral city of Exeter. Waymarking of walking and cycle routes from stations is just part of Tarka development. The vale is ideal for countryside recreation. A place where the quality of the river valley and

its uplands is an essential part of its character. Seen from the surrounding hilltops Williamson describes the riverscape: 'in its course like a viper broken by a buzzard's beak and claws, marked with brown on its twisted and blueish coils'.

On the opposite bank is Bishops Tawton. In the 15th century the villagers were proud of the palace where the Bishops of Exeter came to enjoy peace and solitude. All that remains today is some walling incorporated into a farmhouse beside the church.

From the railway, fertile farmland abounds everywhere. The fields are small and divided by ancient hedgerows. Just north of Kings Nympton Station is 'Junction Pool'. Here tributary Mole joins 'mother' Taw and offers a favourite spot for salmon and sea-trout. Eels and possibly an otter though they are secretive and largely nocturnal animals as well as foxes, badgers, rabbits, pheasants and even deer frequent this valley. If you are fortunate to arrange a Springtime holiday, you will see wild daffodils and primroses peeping from just about everywhere.

The churches in Devon are always close to my heart. There is always 'history' within. Before saying farewell to 'Tarka' it must be Atherington. Its church of St. Mary is a landmark upon the high ground twixt the two rivers. A richly carved screen. A rood-loft, the work of two local carvers, 1530-40. Benchends dated one hundred years earlier and a complete window of medieval glass. We came away 'blessed' by such wonders which remain.

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[John Slader is a West Country author. His book, *The Red Duster at War* was published in 1988.]

# THE FREUD MUSEUM

## by Lily Goddard

THE neo-Georgian, red brick house in 20 Maresfield Gardens NW3 displays a blue plaque:

Sigmund Freud
1856 - 1939
Founder of Psychoanalysis
lived here in
1938 - 1939

London's Freud Museum opened to the public in July 1986, thus not only honouring the memory of one of the world's greatest psychoanalysts but also providing a vivid and fascinating insight into his personal life and habitat.

Freud, his wife Martha, their daughter Anna, his doctor, and Paula Fichtl, the family's maid, arrived in London via Paris in 1938. The 82-year old refugee from Nazi-occupied Austria, a man whose books were publicly burnt in Vienna in 1933, wrote: 'Here I can end my life-work in peace'. Through the intervention of the American Ambassador and his great friend, Princess Marie Bonaparte, Freud's furniture, carpets, library, personal letters and important collection of classical Greek, Roman, Oriental and Egyptian antiquities followed him soon, and he was able to recreate the setting of his Viennese home and study, safe from barbarism, on English soil. He was to enjoy only one year of freedom and the fulfilment of 'an intense wish-fantasy to settle in this country and to become an Englishman' as he explained in a letter. Freud was deeply touched by the affection and respect he found in exile — visitors who called, included H. G. Wells, Leonard Woolf, the Austrian novelist Stefan Zweig and Salvador Dali who made a brilliant sketch of Freud but avoided showing it to him — feeling it bore the mark of approaching death. Sigmund Freud died of cancer of the palate, a painful condition he had endured with fortitude for many years, on 23 September 1939.

Anna Freud, his devoted and brilliant daughter whose psychoanalytical studies and treatment of disturbed children are a major contribution in the field of clinical research (she founded the Hampstead Clinic, now the Anna Freud Centre), occupied the house until her death in 1982; she bequeathed the contents of the residence to the Trust of the Sigmund Freud Archives Inc., supervised by the English Charity Commission.

The rooms in Maresfield Gardens, empty for several years, were prepared to receive once more the unique possessions of their former inhabitants. The knowledge and loving care of the museum's curator at the time, a position now filled by its acting director, Mrs. Erica Davies and her highly qualified staff, are evident in the refurbishing of the interior and the arrangement of *objets d'art*. Admirers and scholars in this country and from all over the world, especially the United States and increasingly, South America, will experience an atmosphere of tranquillity while walking

through the rooms, feeling the powerful and timeless impact of a great legacy: a comfortable, cultivated environment, reminder of Vienna's affluent intellectual lifestyle at the turn of the century, seems to harbour the secrets of hidden obsessions and dreams once exposed here, not only by Freud's patients but also by friends and members of his own family willing to submit to his searching questions.

Anna Freud's room on the first floor contains her desk, photographs, posters and memorabilia as well as a loom she frequently used. So truly her father's daughter, his sixth and youngest child, she turned, after a brief teaching career, to the absorbing studies of child psychology: 'Technique of Child Analysis', published in 1927, and 'The Ego and the Mechanism of Defence' in 1936. She was to remain at Maresfield Gardens — undertaking lecture tours to Vienna and the United States — until the end of her life, sharing the house with Dorothy Burlington, a co-worker and pioneer in child psychoanalysis, who died in 1979.

Fresh flowers and plants along the staircase bring colour and cheerfulness to the place where most rooms, with lights subdued and curtains drawn, convey an air of mystery. On the landing, next to a cabinet filled with fine pieces from the antiquity collection, hangs Ferdinand Schmutzer's charcoal drawing of Freud, dated 1926; and here we find the poignant sketch by Salvador Dali.

The Exhibition Room at the top of the staircase permits a comprehensive assessment of Freud's arrival and life in England, and the events leading up to it; he wrote 900 letters during his stay in London. It was here that *Moses and Monotheism* was completed, ('I have spent my whole life standing up for truth' was Freud's reply to his critics) and *Outline of Psychoanalysis* written. In the adjoining 'video room', two video films are adding a new dimension to the emotional force of the displays. 'Freud and Home Movies 1930-1939' introduced by Anna Freud, are moving recordings of Freud with his family and friends in the charming little houses he rented in the suburbs of Vienna during the summer holidays 1934 to 1937. Here he enjoyed the beauty of gardens, walked his dogs, entertained visitors, Princess Marie Bonaparte among them. His warmth and shy humanity are touchingly captured. The second video was made by Edmund Engelmann who photographed Freud's home and study in Vienna in 1938 — the entrance to 19 Berggasse already surmounted by a swastika. Thus a historic record of the original apartment, with all its contents, especially the priceless antiquity collection, was established, at great risk, surviving intact for over 50 years.

In the pleasant sitting and dining room, polished parquet floors sparkle; solid wardrobes squat along the walls, the wooden panels decorated with European folk art motifs and German proverbs in flourishing black lettering, one dated 1850. There is a beautifully fitted, richly decorated linen chest with handles — the type of 'Bauernmöbel' made by genuine craftsmen to last and appeal.

Occupying the ground floor, the spacious study and library form one continuous, strikingly effective room — Freud's laboratory and the very

heart of the museum. As in his lifetime, some of the bronzes, Greek vases, Roman glass and jade *objets d'art* — about 30 pieces from his collection of 2,500 exquisite examples — are set out here on Freud's desk, and in slim glass cases along the walls. His profound interest in archaeology — a passion that merged with his psychoanalytical work — was influenced by his uncovering of the subconscious, an 'archaeology of the mind', probing into the darkest recesses. Eyes come to rest on the famous couch, strewed with cushions and a colourfully patterned Turkish rug. Patients were encouraged to keep warm beneath it, as the consulting room — no central heating — was cold in winter. Visitors might well exercise their imagination when contemplating the role of this special piece of furniture — a silent witness to hysteria and conditions of neurosis . . . its mystique undiminished for believers and sceptics alike.

Among the abundance of collected treasures one notices an Egyptian funary boat, a carved wooden head by Oscar Nieman on a stele, photographs of Princess Bonaparte, the French entertainer Yvette Gilbert, and Lou Andreas Salomé. The expertly restored library includes volumes of 'Der schöne Mensch' spanning antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. A Hebrew lexicon and the works of Rabelais, Goethe, Dante, Heine, Zola, Thomas Mann and Stefan Zweig represent a selection based on Freud's personal choice over the years. Many of his own books and pamphlets on neurology and psychiatry are now kept in the New York State Psychiatric Institute.

The attractive, glazed patio, built beneath the balcony, leads into the garden; it also houses the Museum Shop selling slides, postcards, stamps and replicas of Freud's favourite antiquities. Among the books on sale is an elegant volume *Sigmund Freud and Art*, lavishly illustrated: introduced by Peter Gay and edited by Lynn Gamwell and Richard Wells, it is a worthwhile addition to the bookshelves of students and connoisseurs.

Here then, a lengendary figure has found a shrine in a London borough — preserving a great intellectual heritage as well as the personal memorabilia of Freud's Jewish cultural background. It also serves the wider aspects of community life by offering resources and information, promoting lectures and relevant exhibitions and recording fresh developments in the field of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy.

More than ever, our own age is troubled with angst and disturbing dreams; Freud showed us the way to discipline and conquer our traumas.

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The Freud Museum, 20 Maresfield Gardens, London NW3 5SX is open Wednesday - Sunday, 12 noon - 5.00 p.m. Admission: £2.00 adults, £1.00 concession (children under 12 admitted free).

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[Lily Goddard was born in Vienna and came to England in 1939. She works as a freelance writer and lectures on children's art and Victorian life.]

# Literary Supplement

## TO WONDER AND TO CURSE

*Marvellous Possessions, The Wonder of the New World.* Stephen Greenblatt. Oxford University Press. £22.50.

> '... in thirty-three days, I passed from the Canary Islands to the Indies with the fleet which the most illustrious king and queen, our sovereigns, gave to me. And there I found very many islands filled with people innumerable, and of them all I have taken possession for their highnesses, by proclamation made and with the royal standard unfurled, and no opposition was offered to me.'

Thus, in one of the most famous of all beginnings, Christopher Columbus began his letter to Luis de Santangel, telling the story of his first voyage. He was not able in 1492 to foresee his three later voyages, his reluctant awareness during and after his third voyage of the existence of the hitherto-unknown southern continent, the massacres of Indians and of some white settlers in turn, and the gloom of his final years at Valladolid, when he felt that his services had been denied real recognition. Five hundred years later — as he could never have surmised — the celebration of his achievement is, in the name of what is called 'political correctness', apparently to be treated with disrespect and as an occasion for farce. Anniversaries are now, it seems, to be opportunities not for pietas but for contumely: if so, this is a revelation not of Columbus's errors or alleged wickedness, but of our own dishonour. In or just before 1992 many hands are engaged in tribute to, or criticism of, the Admiral's voyages. Here the Professor of Literature at Berkeley publishes four lectures delivered in Oxford and in Chicago. He looks at what might be called the interface: the clash of alien cultures, and the sense of wonder that grew from each encounter. His main material comes from Western travel literature, and his main interest is the meaning of the words used by the white discoverers — or re-discoverers. If Columbus was engaged in a journey of discovery, and all but unarmed, why the language of victory and conquest? If he sought islands that he believed were at the eastern edge of the Kingdom of the Great Khan, and had with him letters of introduction and greetings, and an interpreter, should he meet him, why re-name and take possession of them? But the special value of Stephen Greenblatt's study is not the asking of these awkward questions but his equal interest in the go-betweens, the translators of one culture to another. Thus Cortes, in his conquest of Mexico, needed one called Melchior, a baptized Indian, as he needed also Jeronimo de Aguilar, a Spaniard who had, after a shipwreck, been an Indian slave for eight years, and, not least, that remarkable Indian woman the Spaniards called Dona Marina; and those who landed in Florida needed Hernando de Escalante Fontaneda who, again after shipwreck, and seventeen years of captivity by the Calusa Indians, at least spoke four languages and became a major interpreter. All who interpret are willy-nilly diplomats, negotiators and in some degree statesmen.

Those who propose to use 1992 but as an opportunity for a demo might begin by buying this book, and a dictionary with it — for demonstrators are not likely to be familiar with the difficult prose-style and the complex vocabulary that Professor Greenblatt uses. But we owe him thanks for his scholarship, and for his study of the too-little-chronicled Go-Betweens in European-Indian relations.

ESMOND WRIGHT

## THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

*The African Experience.* Roland Oliver. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. xii & 284pp. £19.99.

Professor Oliver says his book was written for sheer pleasure during the first four years after his retirement from the Chair of African History in the University of London. The pleasure will be shared by everybody who reads it.

He has digested an immense amount of research, but he carries it lightly. He has deliberately limited reference to easily available secondary works published within the past ten years, and they are at the end of the book, so that the flow of discussion need not be interrupted. He covers the whole history of Africa from the beginnings of humanity to the release of Nelson Mandela, but does not attempt a continuous narrative: instead he takes up a number of themes in the chronological order of their becoming formative influences.

The first fully food-producing economy was in Egypt, and it supported a population as numerous as that of the whole of the rest of the continent. In the civilisation that developed there the most important technical achievement was the use of metals, particularly iron. The material was widely available, and from the product of smelting it a great variety of tools could be fashioned for different purposes. As mastery of the process spread agricultural economies developed to suit a great range of conditions.

The Nile valley and the north coast were part of the Mediterranean world, cut off by deserts from the rest of Africa. But adventurers pushed across the Sahara, and with the import from Arabia of camels able to carry heavy loads a considerable caravan trade grew up. The Arab conquests brought Islam by this and other routes, and it remains a strong influence throughout the continent.

Europeans showed little interest in Africa until the sixteenth century, when they became involved in the slave trade. It is an activity which cannot be ignored, embarrassing as it is to all nations who have any historical connection with it. Professor Oliver treats it judiciously and informatively. Slavery was endemic throughout Africa. Captives in the frequent clashes between communities were often sold to buyers who would take them away from the area. Raiders from across the Sahara set a precedent. When Europeans came to trade with the coastal people they found on the market a commodity which they could easily dispose of as labour for plantations in America. Without condoning the guilt of the Europeans for the traffic, Professor Oliver concludes that 'in terms of African history then, the Atlantic slave trade is to be seen as a reflection of the intensification, within a limited part of the continent, of an aspect of warfare, which had long been familiar to most African peoples'. (p.128.)

The relationships Europeans formed with coastal populations continued when other commodities replaced slaves in their operations. Competition between traders of different nations was reduced by a conference in Berlin in 1878 which marked out spheres of influence for European countries. As traders pushed inland lines of communication had to be protected. Control was established largely by manoeuvring among rival local groups. Except where there were European settlers there was no conquest. Only when control had been secured were there clashes with a few powerful rulers, such as the Asantehene in Ghana and the Kabaka in Uganda. Control was exercised largely through existing social structures. Very few Europeans were involved. In 1930 fewer than 500 British administrative officials and about 100 officers in the

army and police governed the vast and populous Nigeria. Once they had demonstrated their superiority in lethal weaponry, Europeans did not have to use it much to impose their will on deeply divided populations.

However, it was divisions among Europeans which eventually made their empires untenable. The war of 1939-45 devastated Europe and shattered the illusion of their invincibility. The Americans, who had rescued them, refused to underwrite their imperial pretensions. France and the Netherlands tried to regain their Asian dependencies and failed disastrously. Britain saw the writing on the wall. It withdrew from India in 1947 and set about preparing its African territories for self-government, spurred on by the ugly Mau-Mau rebellion in Kenya. Other colonial powers did the same. Once withdrawal was decided upon it had to happen quickly, allowing too little time for training those who would have to take over the functions of the Europeans. Nevertheless only in the Belgian Congo did the transfer turn out to be almost disastrous.

Perhaps surprisingly the arbitrary units held together by external powers have survived as political entities, notwithstanding a few fissiparous movements such as those of Katanga in Zaire and Biafra in Nigeria. This is partly because they have been under virtual dictatorships most of the time. But central control has been disastrous for their economies. Most of them are weighed down by foreign debt, and discontent at failure to raise standards of living is stoking up widespread repudiation of the policies of the politicians who have been in charge since independence. The few attempts that have been made to introduce European styles of government have suggested that these are not applicable to African situations, and that new machinery will have to be worked out to enable the whole population to participate in the political process. Professor Oliver's examination of African traditions will be helpful to those tackling the problem.

What remained to be resolved after the sixties was the future of territories with European settlers. But in the seventies France had to cut her losses in Algeria, and the white minority of Rhodesia had to yield to the African majority. The problem of South Africa is still unresolved, but change is on the way. If it can be successfully managed, the effect on the whole continent will be immense.

BRUCE PATTISON

## LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURE

*After the Despots. Latin American Views and Interviews.* Andrew Graham-Yooll. Bloomsbury Ltd. 1991. £19.99.

In Europe and the United States Latin American literature was seldom treated seriously before the 1960s. When treated at all, it was perceived as provincial, derivative and — at best — second-rate. An occasional author or poet, like Gabriela Mistral, the Chilean poetess of the 1930s who won a Nobel Prize for literature, won considerable acclaim, but was usually regarded as a Spaniard from overseas rather than a Hispanic American. Certain literary movements, like the *indigenista* authors of Mexico, Peru and Bolivia, who sought in the inter-war period to rehabilitate the Amerindian element of Latin American culture, were considered worthy of academic interest but not of literary value.

Then came the 1960s and 1970s. Latin America was 'rediscovered' for the umpteenth time, on this occasion by the world of literature and publishing. Francoist oppression had meant that Spanish cultural life was in the doldrums for three decades. But, since the 1930s, Mexico City and Buenos Aires had

emerged as two of the world's major publishing capitals, distributing books throughout Hispanic America. And a quarter-century of almost continuous economic growth, rising literacy rates and rapid urbanization after the Second World War combined with freedom to publish and dissent in most countries shaped a climate in which a new generation of writers, film directors and scholars in the social sciences flourished. The Italian publishing houses were especially responsive to the novels, short stories and poetry of Latin Americans; but the French, British and also the Germans were attracted by the freshness, originality and freedom from European conventions of Latin American authors: Jorge Luis Borges from Argentina, Gabriel García Márquez from Colombia, Jorge Amado from Brazil, Mario Vargas Llosa from Peru, Carlos Fuentes from Mexico, Alejo Carpentier from Cuba, Miguel Angel Asturias from Guatemala, to mention probably the best known. The Latin American literary 'boom' was assisted by a generation of excellent translators, by the skill of its main proponents in writing for an international reader without losing their appeal in their home countries, and by talented marketing and packaging.

The trend towards authoritarianism in the 1970s and 1980s prompted several of Latin America's leading authors to emerge as spokesmen in the struggle against state terrorism. Mobilized by the experience of censorship and exile and by the observation of routine brutality, the violation of human rights, intimidation and disappearances, Latin American writers (like Church activists) used their connexions in the United States and Western Europe (especially newly democratic Spain, whose writers and journalists were instinctively sympathetic) to arouse opposition to the tyrannies of Pinochet, Videla and others.

In this book Andrew Graham-Yooll, an Anglo-Argentine writer, at one time the correspondent of *The Guardian* in Buenos Aires, brings together interviews and observations that he has collected in his travels in Latin America. Herein are contained interviews and discussions with such figures as Borges, Vargas Llosa, García Márquez and Isabel Allende. Each piece casts light on the political uncertainties of the 1980s — violence and insecurity in Colombia, the war of the Malvinas/Falklands, the ways in which writers circumvented censorship in Chile, opposition to the Cuban Revolution. The book is highly effective in conveying both the sense of outrage, impotence and anger felt by writers confronting military dictatorship and the cautious optimism that has accompanied the transition from dictatorship to democracy of the mid and late 1980s. The volume contains perceptive insights on subjects as various as the attitudes of the children of exiles to returning to a country they hardly recall and the extent to which authors seem themselves as 'Latin American' or as 'Colombian', 'Mexican', etc. This is a book to be recommended highly to the reader who is not already acquainted with Latin America; but there is much in it too for the specialist.

CHRISTOPHER ABEL

## DEEP ECOLOGY

*The Ecological Self*. Freya Mathews. Routledge. £35.00.

This slim volume comprises volumes distilled of Western philosophy which might explain its high price. It reverses mechanistic assumption, and the quality it propounds has no monetary value at all. But the price could also be attributed to its being in the nature of an academic dissertation with its somewhat philosophic vocabulary. It continues the precedent set by Arne Naess whose writings on Deep Ecology demand a high degree of concentration, also. Deep Ecology represents one's heartfelt connection with the Earth.

On reaching the end of the 163 pages of text I experienced a sudden let down. It was because of having been led to anticipate twenty-one pages before, rather coyly, what had been suggested to be lacking in Arne Naess's system of Deep Ecology: 'In Section VI I draw the final — and by far the most speculative — conclusions of this book. I offer them completely undogmatically, as much in a spirit of hope and wonder as of conviction'.

Immediately it had struck me that Freya Mathews could not have read Naess's seminal work on Deep Ecology, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle,* simply because it had not been published in English when she gave in her manuscript to the publisher. She had had access only to books and environmental journals published in the USA and Australia over the previous four years.

But to go back to the beginning. She says, 'This book began life a long time ago, in the mid-seventies'. It is a first book which appears to have been written out of a deep disquiet in the mind, sinking into the soul, with the longing for an answer, to calm and strengthen. It suggests that she would have embraced Deep Ecology wholly, from what she had read, but for what she took to be crucial Eastern influences which made her shy away. It hardened her resolve to find another way, through Western philosophical enquiry.

And that is what makes the book so interesting for a British reader brought up to feel comfortable in the Western Judeo-Christian tradition. She stresses the vital need of a cosmology for the health of a culture, which we have been missing since 'Newtonism cut us adrift into the void', and which allowed to be established the long preamble of song and dance. That culture needed a Third World on which to vent its avarice, and in the process irrevocably damage the ecosystem.

The author felt the driving need to put us back on course. Her inspiration was Spinoza (as it had been for Naess), and she determined to get to the bottom of his *Deus sive Natura* rationalist philosophy. She connected his exciting principle with the monistic cosmology of Einstein, and came to discover that through Einstein's system theory contemporary physics had been enabled to confirm Spinoza's interpretation of substance, that everything is interconnected. She shows individuality, 'selfhood', to be consistent with this interconnectedness, and explains 'why recognition of this relationship of "oneness" should confer meaning on life', and what self-realisation means in relation to Nature.

But Spinoza's intellectual love of God or Nature did not satisfy her (as it had not for Naess), and she treats us to deft reasoning to show that a true meaning of life is not to be found 'through a passive Spinoza-style contemplation of sublime Nature, and a joyful basking in our unity with it' but through 'teaching our hearts to practise affirmation, and by awakening our faculty of active, outreaching, world directed love'.

Finally, Freya Mathews introduces the Red Indian eco-aware notion of 'tread lightly' and suggests that 'we are implicated in the cosmic conatus that is the well-spring of spiritual feelings in cultures everywhere' and urges a 'surrender of the ego to a wider reality'. This most sensitive and deeply cerebral author at last brings us to the point where in her view knowledge and reason are eclipsed.

RODNEY AITCHTEY

## STAR PERFORMER

*Matisse, Picasso, Miró: As I Knew Them.* Rosamond Bernier. Sinclair-Stevenson. £30.

Rosamond Bernier, the author of this beautifully produced and lavishly illustrated book is one of those enviable people who can't seem to put a foot wrong. At the Metropolitan Museum in New York she is their star performer. Full professors offer ten fascinating art history lectures for $80 — and have seats available. Madame Bernier delivers four for $100 — that invariably sell out six months in advance.

Her chance to meet such giants as Matisse and Picasso came when she went to Paris just after the war to work for American *Vogue*. Picasso invited her to Antibes and suggested she visit Matisse in Venice. Arriving late, she mollified him by presenting him with her brand new Parker pen. Pretty, well dressed and conventionally correct as only middle class American girls could be, she must have been a refreshing change from the hustling journalists, dealers and hangers-on that usually pestered them. They treated her with avuncular kindness.

The aged, invalid Matisse set her most at ease. Even in bed, 'he was a benign figure of Edwardian elegance — there was never anything informal about Matisse — neatly dressed in a white shirt, turquoise sweater and matching tie'. They shared an interest in fashion. 'Matisse monitored how women dressed, how they did their hair and made up their eyebrows and lips.' 'When it came to painting women's hats he had no equal' is one of her serious judgements.

It is when Bernier comments on the paintings that she comes unstuck. Of Matisse's 1904 painting, 'Luxe, Calme et Volupté', a seminal work which launched the Fauve movement and influenced innumerable painters she writes: '... somehow the picture doesn't come off, for all its historical importance. To me, it looks more as if sculpture were paying a call on painting and both sides were finding it rather sticky going'. Of the solemn and enigmatic 'Bathers with a Turtle' she comments: '... there was something curiously awkward, hesitant and uneven about it'. It was Matisse's response to the stark hieratic dignity of Giotto's decorations for the Arena Chapel in Padua. Her evaluations are the more surprising since Madame Bernier is now married to the former art critic of the London *Sunday Times*. In her acknowledgements she writes: 'My husband, John Russell, persuaded me it (the book) could be written. My hand is in his on every page'. Maybe he dozed off once or twice.

Picasso made use of her with characteristic cunning. 'I've arranged for my family in Barcelona to receive you', he told her. Off she went with a photographer. Picasso knew they would show her the huge cache they held of his delightful early paintings. He had vowed not to set foot in Spain while Franco ruled. During the Occupation, the Nazis had forbidden him to exhibit. What better than to have a large spread in *L'Oeil*, the excellent art magazine which Bernier, with her then husband, Georges Bernier, had launched in 1955? It alerted art dealers and collectors world-wide to an attractive untapped source of works. She was thrilled when, by way of thanks, Picasso sent her photographs of himself reading *L'Oeil*.

Joan Miró emerges as the most charming of her friends. In 1954 she joined him and his wife in Barcelona which he toured with her, introducing her to the works of the dread architect, Gaudi. He had arrived in Paris terribly poor with 'The Farm, Montroig, 1921-22', now in the National Gallery, Washington. Nobody liked it. He had to take taxis he could ill afford to the dealers. One

said: 'It's far too big; people live in small apartments. Why don't you cut it into several pieces?'. Ernest Hemingway bought it for mere pennies.

To the world Miró appeared the most tranquil and angelic of men. But 'In the studio I am always alone. No assistant. Never any music. I go completely wild, the older I get, the meaner and more aggressive I get'.

This is a gossipy book by an animated journalist who could not resist the mission to inform. It is light years away from the scholarly writings of a John House or Robert Rosenblum, but Madame Bernier has guaged to a hair her particular public — rich, worldly, educated but inexpert, who want to be effortlessly amused. On this showing I don't imagine publishers will be crowding her door. Her talent is as a performer — impeccably prepared, beautifully groomed, gowned and bejewelled. And at $10,000 a time, the most expensive lecturer on the arts in the United States, she should worry!

MURIEL JULIUS

## AN INCANDESCENCE OF EXPECTANCY

*The Tall Trees of Marsland: Reflections on Life and Time.* E. W. Tomlin. Lodenek Press. Hardback £13.95. Paperback £7.95.

This is a new kind of autobiography — a reflective essay in which one theme develops out of another but always in the background is the fundamental theme of the meaning of existence. The natural setting is itself symbolic of much that is here explored.

David Holbrook has contributed the attractive cover picture of the author's home as well as the excellent Preface in which he states: 'Frederick Tomlin was exceptional among philosophers. He did not live in some abstract intellectual construction split off from the real world as so many do'. Many who find pleasure in the expression of complex thought in elegant, lucid prose will have been long aware of the writing of this philosopher, author and teacher.

Professor Tomlin lived for many years in the Marsland Valley of Morwenstow and the title of his book leads the reader into the heart of his theme. He spent his life asking important questions and finding some of the answers. In his quest he illuminates areas of darkness and doubt and provides some reassurance and understanding for his readers. Tomlin had known the sophistication of the social scene and the demands of success. He returned to this remote rural retreat to write about the things that mattered to him.

He introduces his first chapter with a quotation from Beethoven: 'If all else fails, there remains the country, even in winter'. The second paragraph states his major subject: 'I call this account of my developing thoughts "The Tall Trees of Marsland" because the trees, once I had grown accustomed to living amongst them, came to serve me as potent symbols. In the natural world there seemed to be at work two fundamental forces, the one formative and creative making for growth, and the other — once growth is complete — functional... The formative and creative force is, so to speak, vertical to the functional or horizontal one.'

Tomlin never forgets that vertical dimension. He was born in a happy home in Surrey, with a mother who, although a widow, 'had the supreme art of maintaining the ritual of home.' He shared this loving security with his sister and brother. They made their own entertainment, were voracious readers, and together enjoyed the festivals of Easter and Christmas, thus developing at an early age these periods of 'reverence, solicitude and commemoration'. Of course they did not escape the inevitable spells of tedium but these were relieved by 'the faint incandescence of expectancy'. The author recognizes the significance

of ritual. As a senior representative of the British Council he taught in many countries, making himself familiar with the environment and the beliefs of the people living and working there. He valued the lessons of history but he was always concerned with the present and the future.

He feared that the young today were not receiving the education and the inspiration they so desperately need. He asserts, 'The enrichment of psycho-spiritual life to which youth is above all entitled, is the counter to the despair and acedia into which young people can easily fall'. Nevertheless, he warns students of the dangers of wasting too much time and energy striving to be in 'absolute equality' with their teachers, or even to 'by-pass' them. Professor Tomlin was convinced that, such power conferred, the standards of scholarship and learning would inevitably suffer. A timely warning. He deplored the pseudo-elitism of the media and also the trivialising of important historical events in the name of 'entertainment'; e.g., the landing on the moon. He considered that quite often the media encouraged irrational behaviour verging on fanaticism which frequently ends in destruction and violence. He firmly believed that 'of all irrational activities violence is the most extreme'.

Frederick Tomlin was well aware of man's ability to overcome difficulties and to survive in this dangerous and amazing world; striving to improve society, preserve the environment and extend the boundaries of knowledge. He lived hopefully and retained his own 'incandescence of expectancy' to the end of his life. These humane and witty reflections on life and time are rewarding reading.

NONIE BEERBOHM

## SHORTER REVIEWS

**1492, the Year and the Era** (Constable, £17.95). In any telling, the Columbus story is that of a great navigator, whateyer his alleged shortcomings as man and as administrator. In Barnet Litvinoff's book, the Admiral's first voyage remains a good tale, even if it is surrounded and all but submerged by a bewildering and unrelated account of events in contemporary Europe, and by the vendettas and wars, alliances and assorted immoralities of the Borgias and the Medici, of the Valois and the Habsburgs. It is a crowded canvas — the publishers call it 'a landscape both savage and sublime' — with no central theme; few portraits come to life; there are no quotations and no footnotes; and the majority of the books listed in the 'select bibliography' were written thirty or more years ago. There are many more scholarly and better-written biographies than this of the Admiral of the Ocean Sea.

**Maurice Baring: A Citizen of Europe.** (Constable. £18.95.) Maurice Baring, part of the great banking family, was a man of many parts and this beautifully written biography by his great-neice, Dr. Emma Letley, is most welcome. To many, Baring is remembered for his novels but he was also a diplomat, traveller, war correspondent, playwright and a lover of all things Russian. It was he who introduced the works of Dostoevsky to western Europe. During the Great War he was in the Royal Flying Corps (later the Royal Air Force) and helped General, later Lord, Trenchard, as an interpreter between himself and French officials. This book captures much of the world of European politics and high society known to Baring.

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## ON THE BANKS OF THE STORMY JORDAN: THE COMING MIDDLE EAST WATER CRISIS

**by Lawrence Tal**

DURING the 1980s, US government intelligence services identified ten places in the world where war could break out over scarce water resources. Most were in the Middle East where water has replaced oil as the most important strategic resource. Oil is a good source of revenue, but it does not sustain life, especially in an arid region where rainfall is scarce and rivers are few. Rising population rates, economic expansion, inefficient use of water resources, and continued political tension between resource-sharing countries have all pushed the Middle East to the brink of a water crisis.

Certain geographic factors affect water availability in the Middle East. Throughout most of the region, rainfall is irregular and varies between 250mm and 400mm annually. This presents a problem since agricultural cultivation requires at least 400mm of regular rainfall. Second, there are only three major rivers in the Middle East — the Nile, Tigris-Euphrates, and Jordan. Those who do not live in the major river basins often depend on water stored beneath the earth's surface. Groundwater is found in shallow aquifers replenished by rainfall but limited in their ability to sustain long-term economic growth. Deeper aquifers contain fossilised water, which has usually been trapped beneath the earth's surface for thousands of years, and is extracted by drilling. It takes years for rainwater to seep into the earth and collect in the deep aquifers and, consequently, these resources are considered to be non-renewable.

It has been said that the Middle East is a demographic time-bomb ready to explode. In the United States and other Western nations, annual population growth is usually around one per cent or less — in the Middle East, it is around three per cent. This alarming annual population increase means that the countries of the Middle East and North Africa will have to absorb another 80 million people by the end of this decade. More and more people will be competing for scarce resources and current problems will become acute.

Geographic and demographic problems are exacerbated by political disputes. It is the political dimension of the water problem which is the most immediately dangerous. Egypt's late president Anwar Sadat and Jordan's King Hussein, for example, both said that water was the only

thing which could make them go to war against another state. Three water-related factors could potentially spark off armed conflict in the region. First, the location of resources does not strictly coincide with national boundaries. What an upstream user does with its river water will affect the water supply of every downstream user. Second, most countries depend on a few major water resources which could easily be disrupted in the event of hostilities. Therefore, water-deficient states seek to diversify their supply sources, often leading to disputes with other states competing for the same resources. Finally, water security means that most countries are extremely protective of water resources lying within their borders. The Middle Eastern countries, with their scarce resources, cannot afford to be careless with their water and are thus wary of any plan designed to share waters with other, particularly hostile, nations. These countries are equally dismissive of any scheme which would require them to depend primarily on water from another country.

Given these geographic, demographic, and political factors, it is easy to see why water is such a sensitive issue in the Middle East. The area in which these three factors are the most delicately balanced is the volatile Jordan river basin. Four states — Jordan, Israel, Syria and Lebanon — use the Jordan river and have shown that they are willing to use force to secure their interests. From 1951 until 1967, when Israel captured the West Bank and Golan Heights and temporarily relieved its water problems, there were eleven water-related ceasefire violations in the Jordan river basin. Today, there is still no water-sharing agreement among these states and the potential for conflict becomes greater as water needs increase.

There have been numerous plans for the integrated development of the Jordan river basin, but none have been found entirely satisfactory by all parties. The most significant scheme was the 1955 Johnston Plan which allocated the waters of the Jordan to the main users. Eric Johnston, a special Ambassador appointed by US President Dwight Eisenhower, came up with a plan which called for Jordan to get 52 per cent of the water, Israel 36 per cent, Syria nine per cent, and Lebanon three per cent. After much negotiation, the plan was shelved because of Arab-Israeli political differences. Because Syria and Lebanon have other reliable sources of water, they are not entirely dependent on the Jordan river. Israel and Jordan, on the other hand, both depend on the waters of the Jordan for their water needs and are the major users of the river today. Although there is no formal agreement between the two countries, Israel and Jordan have tacitly accepted the Johnston Plan. Both countries generally adhere to the plan's watershare quotas as a guideline for their own ventures.

The major development of Israel's water resources was the construction in 1964 of the National Water Carrier which takes water from Lake Tiberias, or the Sea of Galilee, in the north to the Negev desert in the south. The main drawback with taking water from Lake Tiberias is that the lake's storage capacity is limited and its rate of natural refill relatively low. Because of over-usage, in addition to a recent drought, Lake Tiberias is now at its lowest level in sixty years. Despite diminishing water levels

in Lake Tiberias, the problem of over-dependence on this water source was alleviated in 1967 when Israel captured the West Bank from Jordan. Today, over 50 per cent of Israel's drinking water comes from the West Bank. The most significant water source in the West Bank is the Yarkon-Taninim aquifer which now supplies Israel with 25-40 per cent of its water needs. Therefore, Israel insists that any eventual peace settlement leading to Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank will have to recognise the Jewish state's water requirements. Since over 50 per cent of Israel's water resources rely on rain which falls outside of the pre-1967 borders, making territorial concessions to the Palestinians is not only an ideological concern, but also a real strategic concern. Moreover, Israel is currently using its water resources at almost 20 per cent beyond their natural replenishment rate, which means that the country will soon face a major water deficit if the current trend continues.

In the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, Palestinians have little or no control over water resources. There are few reliable data available, and the debate on water resources is highly politicised. The fact remains, however, that all major new wells sunk in the West Bank and Gaza since 1967 have been exclusively for Israeli use. In 1984, per capita water consumption for Palestinians living in Gaza was estimated to be 115 million cubic metres (MCM) — for the Israeli population living in Gaza it was 2,000 MCM. Palestinians argue that disproportionate allocation of water resources is the Israeli military administration's way of limiting Palestinian agricultural expansion. The Israelis reply that agriculture has been the major cause of dwindling water supplies and must be limited. One way of limiting water use is through quotas. In the West Bank, 1967 water quotas are still in effect although the population has doubled under occupation. Gaza is one of the most densely populated places on earth, and the scramble for scarce water resources has led to major problems. Heavy pumping of groundwater from the one aquifer has caused a drop in water table levels and the intrusion of seawater. Also, the use of various fertilisers and the lack of raw sewage treatment facilities has led to a high level of contamination of the water supply. Current estimates say that Gaza's water, 30 per cent of which is currently unsuitable for domestic use because of high salinity, will be completely unusable by the year 2000. By that time, the population will have reached one million. It is also expected that Gaza's water-intensive citrus industry will have to be completely abandoned.

In Jordan, the water situation is equally dire. The Jordan river supplies about 75 per cent of Jordan's water needs and the country has few other reliable sources of water. The Jordan river only supplies Jordan with 250 MCM of water per capita; anything below 1,000 MCM per capita is considered by international agencies to be below the poverty line. Jordan, like its neighbour Israel, has placed great emphasis on the development of water resources. The first stage of the East Ghor canal in the Jordan valley was completed in 1964, allowing Jordan to expand agricultural production. Since then, further development of the canal has

been set back by political and financial difficulties. After the 1967 war, the PLO began an intensive campaign of military raids against Israel. These raids were chiefly conducted from the Jordan valley which gave Israel cause for retaliation. Israel responded in 1969 with massive artillery and bombing raids against the East Ghor canal which were ostensibly designed to stop Palestinian guerrilla operations. The underlying reason for putting the canal out of order was water. Israeli water authorities calculated that the level of the Jordan river fell 686mm from its average base during April-May 1969. The Israelis assumed that the Jordanians were drawing more than their quota allocated by the Johnston Plan, and the raids thus served a two-fold purpose: to stop Palestinian raids and to stop the Jordanians from taking more water. The East Ghor canal conflict between Israel and Jordan was mediated by the United States. After secret negotiations during 1969 and 1970, Jordan was permitted to repair the canal in return for its affirmation that it still respected the Johnston Plan quotas.

Today, Jordan is pushing for the construction of the Wahda, or Unity, dam on the upper Yarmouk river. With an annual population growth rate of 3.8 per cent (one of the world's highest), Jordan desperately needs to expand its water resources base. The Wahda project is being held up by the World Bank's refusal to fund a venture which is not agreed upon by all user states. Israel has refused to approve a project which it feels will cut into its own water supply and strengthen its neighbour. Despite political difficulties, it is estimated that even if the dam were to be built, Jordan would only buy itself perhaps another five years of breathing space before its population caught up with its water supply. In the interim, Jordan is drilling deeper for groundwater which is quickly being depleted. The kingdom is also seeking to diversify its water-harnessing capabilities by using drip irrigation and solar-powered desalination technologies. However, these schemes are entirely too expensive for a country in Jordan's economic position and can only be regarded as temporary measures.

The situation in the politically tense Jordan river basin is going from bad to worse. Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, and Jordan are now facing a combined water deficit of nearly 500-600 MCM per year which will exceed 1,000 MCM by the end of the decade. It is imperative that Israel and Jordan find a way to meet their water deficit at a cost they can both afford. In the short term, Jordan and Israel could consider importing water from other countries. Israel, in particular, has pursued this strategy. Egypt's President Sadat first proposed selling water to Israel during the 1970s. The plan, which involved piping water from the Nile river to Israel, was rejected as technically and politically unfeasible. Water from Egypt's Sinai aquifers is also unsuitable because its high levels of salinity make it virtually unusable. Israel has most recently talked about importing water from Turkey, but there are a number of problems with this idea. First, Israel is very concerned about becoming dependent on Turkish water and seeks assurances about the continuation of supply during times of

crisis. Second, the security of water transfer is something which must be resolved; ocean shipping involves certain risks that Israel is hesitant to take. Finally, the design of water transfer vessels is still not clear. During recent negotiations with private Turkish companies, a scheme to transport water from Turkey in flexible barges and floating bags was discussed but not agreed upon. The additional terminals and pipelines required for this type of water import could add over £300 million to the cost of the actual water transported. Because of these problems, Israel's government announced in November 1990 that it would not import water but would encourage private import schemes.

Another short-term solution for Israel and Jordan would involve infrastructural economic changes. Both countries could shift valuable resources away from costly agricultural ventures and channel them towards more profitable industrial schemes. Israel, more so than Jordan, has invested heavily in agriculture and devotes over 70 per cent of its water supply to an agricultural sector which contributes only five per cent to the country's gross national product. Israeli farmers are now starting to face a reduction in water supplies for certain crops, and the government has placed restrictions on intensive farming. A problem with agricultural readjustment in Israel is that it is linked to Zionist ideology, which emphasises the importance to the Jewish people of tilling the soil of the land of Israel. In Jordan, agriculture is not as heavily subsidised as in Israel and is generally quite profitable. Moreover, Jordan lacks the industrial infrastructure that could provide alternative employment to displaced farmers. Israel, then, could probably benefit more from de-emphasising agriculture than could Jordan.

Short-term solutions to maximise water-use efficiency involve new technologies. Drip irrigation, artificial replenishing of aquifers, recycling of sewage water, and use of saline-resistant and high-yield seed varieties can all be used to save water and to boost agricultural output. Other technologies are far more expensive and often impractical. The Israelis have experimented with cloud seeding, although it is expensive and does not yield much water. The idea of towing icebergs from arctic zones to the Middle East caused quite a sensation in the world press a few years ago. However, water loss through melting and transport costs make this idea impractical. One of the most technically feasible alternatives, but also one of the most costly, is the desalination of seawater. Desalination involves removing the impurities from seawater by using either heat or pressure (known as reverse osmosis). The major drawback with this method is that it requires a cheap, readily available source of energy, effectively discounting all but the rich Arabian Gulf states. Sixty per cent of the world's desalination capacity is in the Gulf states, and Saudia Arabia alone accounts for over 30 per cent of global production of desalinated water. Neither Israel nor Jordan, both with major economic problems, is in any position to invest in expensive desalination technology.

All of these schemes — water importation, economic restructuring, and new technologies — are essentially temporary answers to the water prob-

lems of Israel and Jordan. The only long-term solution to the crisis is an international agreement, in the context of a peace settlement, which regulates the use of the shared waters of the Jordan and the Occupied Territories. The United States, the party which holds all of the cards in the Middle East, could play a major role in bringing Israelis, Palestinians, and Jordanians together to discuss the water problem. The US has the expertise and the experience to make a significant impact on the water crisis. America, many experts have suggested, could form a single agency dedicated to a broad strategic approach to water problems throughout the world. Working with the UN and the World Bank, the US now has an excellent opportunity to take advantage of its post-Gulf war position in the Middle East to exert pressure on the parties to discuss water problems. Recent US-sponsored peace negotiations have shown that water is indeed a major issue on the agenda of all of the parties to the conflict but that it is not the top priority. Procedural haggling and lack of substantive discussion in Madrid, Washington, and Moscow have left the water issue in a state of limbo. Until there is a resolution of the Palestinian problem and comprehensive peace treaties are signed, the water issue will remain a destabilising factor in Middle Eastern politics.

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[Lawrence Tal is a research student at St. Antony's College, Oxford. He is currently researching British policy towards Jordan during the late 1950s and early 1960s.]

# PRINCIPLES AND POLITICS: PRESIDENT BUSH AND THE CONSERVATIVES

**by James W. LoGerfo**

ONE can mark this moment in American political history as either the fourth year of the Bush era or the fourth year since the end of the Reagan era — a distinction worth noting.

George Bush will offer his services to the American people for the second time in next autumn's general election. He will do so merely as a Republican. His claim to be a conservative Republican in the Reagan cast will lack authenticity after having been charged repeatedly with deviationism by prominent conservative leaders and organizations. The opposition did not spring from the head of Zeus suddenly, but had been building steadily from at least the time of the Budget Agreement between the president and the leaders of both parties in the Congress in the autumn of 1990, which resulted in a significant tax increase for the American public. The entry of Patrick J. Buchanan, a former speech writer and media consultant for Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, into the contest for the Republican Party's presidential nomination, and the threat to withhold support for Bush from the *National Review* magazine, the influential conservative political magazine whose readers and supporters far exceed the official 150,000 circulation count, encapsulate the opposition to Bush from two segments of conservative opinion.

Both the Buchanan candidacy and the *National Review* threat of non-support reflect a degree of dissatisfaction that predates the Autumn 1990 budget agreement, when Bush renounced his pledge to the 1988 party convention not to raise new taxes. That he did so in a feeble effort to win Democratic support to contain the budget deficit reflected equally his weakness in dealing with the Democrat-controlled Congress in the first two years of his administration and his lack of anything resembling a programme or vision by which to judge new proposals. Many conservatives, like Edwin Feulner, president of the conservative policy research organization, the Heritage Foundation, had hoped Bush would continue the forceful leadership style of Ronald Reagan. Based on Bush's pledge to the convention and first election campaign, there was justice in this hope. But the president came closest to emulating the forceful leadership style and the consequent immense popularity of Reagan only before and during the Gulf War.

In domestic policy, he was frustrated by steadfast and unrepentant opposition from the dominant Democrats in the Congress. Instead of challenging the Democratic leadership by explicating, and thus defending, his positions on, for example, new civil rights legislation, the extension of unemployment benefits, or the transportation bill, Bush preferred to negotiate with Democrat leaders. He hoped that by giving them most of what they wanted, he could avoid an unpleasantly rancorous conflict in Congress and in the public prints. By being so pliable, he appears to have

allowed his domestic agenda to be set by Messrs. Mitchell, Foley and Gephardt, the Democrat majority leader in the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Democrat majority leader in the House, respectively. They propose an issue or programme, Bush edits it lightly, and the transmogrified programme becomes his alternative to the Democrat plan. Maureen Dowd, the White House correspondent for the *New York Times,* refers to Mr. Bush variously as the 'non-ideological' or 'bipartisan' president.

As a result of this pattern, the administration's rate of domestic spending, according to a report from the Heritage Foundation, and a later one from the Congressional Budget Office, exceeds that of Lyndon Johnson's 'Great Society'. Indeed, domestic spending increased under Bush three times faster than under the administration of James Earle Carter.

In early 1991, the Heritage Foundation noted the high domestic spending during the Bush presidency and concluded that Bush had done nothing to unseat Washington technocrats who set the domestic agenda without let or hindrance. They lament the absence of the hallmarks of Reaganomics: a low tax structure, leading to economic growth, and the anti-regulatory spirit. Democrat leaders think that the deficits caused the recession (although they did little to prevent the deficits or propose means to curtail it).

The Congressional Budget Office, a congressional monitoring service not inclined by nature (of the Democrat majority in both Houses) to be especially friendly to the White House, noted in a January 1992 report that the deficit for fiscal year 1992 will reach $352 billion and that budgetary spending reached 25% of the Gross National Product, the highest percentage since World War II.

The spastic increase in federal domestic spending invited criticism first from conservative economists and economic-minded legislators who saw at once the threat to party principles, the Reagan legacy, and, most importantly, the presidential re-election effort. The conservative political analyst George Will notes that the result of such consistently high spending is that real income for Americans, which had risen under Reagan, slowed under Bush.

The president's seemingly bland personality, his lack of fluency in his mother tongue (despite having earned a Phi Beta Kappa key from Yale), and his attempts, as celebrated as they are fatuous, to affect the locutions and pastimes of what he perceives to be the average American, are not helpful. He sounds foolish and looks awkward. All of this is motion without direction. He reacts, not leads, to the point of passivity. The passivity has affected his hitherto protected domain of foreign affairs. By subscribing to the principle of stability, he gives the appearance — unjustly — of taking leadership from external sources, not in this instance from George Mitchell, but from Helmut Kohl and John Major. When those leaders first urged then despatched aid to the Kurds, then to the constituent republics of the former Soviet Union and actively attempted to support Croatian independence, Mr. Bush temporized, not wanting

to undermine the authority of his friend Gorbachev. This policy reached high irony when, in December 1991, five months after the failed coup d'état, Mr. Bush adjured members of the Ukrainian parliament to continue submission to Moscow.

Mr. Bush's right flank attributes his floundering to a programmatic wilderness in the White House, the absence of a metaphorical road map; without such a guide, he cannot find his way beyond what is immediately palpable. There is no standard by which he can judge success or failure. George Will compares Bush's lack of a vision and bold leadership to the Tory Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour's description of his own attitude in the first years of this century toward the issue of protectionism — having no settled convictions. The problem is not necessarily the Bush personality. It is a Republican affliction. Republicans generally do not have a coherent philosophy of government, because they have an inchoate and superficial antipathy to government in general. Having a programme would suggest an enjoyment of government. The leaders of Mr. Bush's party tend not to worship politics; participation is viewed as public service, akin to volunteering time to work with the Boy Scouts. Their energies are spent on their careers. As businessmen, not as Republicans, they have no philosophy, save what will cause their organizations to prosper. They support those who will help their corporation's ledger books. With government being the generous source of contracts and the retributive imposer of sometimes onerous regulations, businessmen fear to alienate the leaders of either party, making their attitude toward government ambiguous at best. Their firms contribute funds to both parties, to whomever possesses, or is about to possess, power. Their aversion to confrontation led to generous contracts with trade unions and contributed in no small way to high inflation and to the poor competitive position of American industry. As businessmen, they adopt pragmatism as their method of operation. As Republicans, these men are loath to shed the caution that led to their success in business and, consequently, when they are brought into policy-making positions in government, they tend inexorably to be pragmatic, operating without a consistent philosophy of government. The businessmen Mr. Bush has attracted to the administration, Mossbacher, Brady, Baker, Yeutter, Skinner, et al, are considered centrists within the Republican Party. Despite the president's frequent praise for free trade, for example, his administration has done little to remove tariffs and import quotas designed to protect inefficient domestic industries. That protectionism might attract voters from the affected industries in a secondary boon. Thus, a significant cause of this programmatic chaos can perhaps be attributed to the presidential reliance on business-managers as aides, to the detriment of bold innovators with a purpose.

In addition to the conventional loci of opposition to Bush, a new locus can be found in nationwide radio programmes with intelligent, well-informed hosts who have made advocating conservative principles respectable. The audiences for these programmes are, for the most part, well

informed. One programme claims almost 12 million listeners daily, a potent club with which to pound the president.

Popular support for Reagan was based on his strong principles, particularly reducing the shadow of the government over the citizenry. It was not a surprise to find a plethora of non-businessmen in the Reagan administration. Reagan's key idea people — Lehman, Bennett, Allen — were academics, not career businessmen. It should not be surprising that these people also advocated bold measures based on consistent principles.

Younger, more conservative Republicans in the House of Representatives, like Newt Gingrich and Mickey Edwards, have urged Mr. Bush to take a stronger stand against Democratic congressional leaders who, as the *National Review* magazine says, play politics as a contact sport.

When the rapprochement with the Soviet Union was reaching its apogee, or when the Iraqi army was forced to evacuate Kuwait, and the president was enjoying broad public support, the pollsters found him all but invincible as a contender for a second term. The Democrat opposition, sensing the president enjoyed public support because of foreign affairs triumphs, charged that he wasn't doing enough domestically, that he lacked a 'domestic programme'. He responded sensibly at first to these charges, repeated uncritically in the media, that he indeed had a domestic agenda; it was simply not the same one the Democrat leaders espoused. Though they continued to repeat their accusation, the Democrats would have been left without an issue had not two unexpected distractions taken the public attention: the plight of the Kurds and Shi-ites and the intractable economy. The Kurds in post-war Iraq pulled at the world's heartstrings and the president's initial reluctance either to help their cause or mitigate their suffering made him appear hopelessly insensitive. That the Kurds and Shi-ites rose against their government after repeated American appeals to do so did not help the president's stature.

The downturn in the business cycle, which economists and media commentators are pleased to call a recession, did not end when predicted, and proved an additional embarrassment to Mr. Bush. He wasn't doing enough to end it or to help those hurt by it. More insensitivity. He and his staff failed to defend the sound economic position that there are no magic wands a president can wave at the economy to help it recover instantly. There is not much a president can do in a market economy to end a recession directly. The irony of witnessing the end of the Soviet and East European command economies through their inherent defects did not prevent legions of journalists from urging the president to command an end to the recession. Intervention — as defined by his critics — meant creating government jobs — in construction, repairing the 'infrastructure' (roads, bridges, tunnels on the federal highway system) would increase the spending of borrowed money and produce unwanted inflation. The only useful means to alleviate suffering in the short term are unemployment benefits and increasing training programmes, which exist already. His Democrat opponents wanted him to increase the benefits last autumn; he agreed, on condition that the costs be recovered from non-

revenue sources. Presidential aides came up with a solution that included a more efficient collection of taxes and monitoring of expenses. This technique, often called 'smoke and mirrors', is used frequently to avoid appearing to increase the deficit. No one notes the embarrassment of having admitted that hitherto the administration tolerated inefficient collection of taxes or lax monitoring of spending. Yet no one doubts the costs will be added to the deficit.

The more intractable the recession, the greater the number of declared Democratic candidates for their party's nomination. Bush's advantage as war hero had been supplanted. Analogies to Winston Churchill's fate after World War II were drawn. Presidential aides fretted.

The president's right flank attributes the recession to his *volte face* on tax increases. The Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute, another research organization in Washington, claim the intensity of the recession (still mild compared to the recession of 1981) derives from the $195 billion tax increase in 1990, what Patrick Buchanan calls 'a breach of faith'. Most of the president's conservative critics agree that the recession accelerated after the tax increase. The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Jack Kemp, probably the most conservative member of the Bush cabinet, demurs, and suggests the cause of the recession dates from the tax legisation of 1986, a package of laws extracted from a Republican president who lacked a legislative majority, but had to trade money for defence spending. That legislation increased the capital gains tax, removed the deductibility of passive investment losses, and lengthened the depreciation period from 19 to 31 years. The package had the effect of reducing investment in the economy by $300 billion. Though an important capitulation, it did not appear to have had as immediate an impact as the tax package of 1990.

The *National Review* magazine has listed its bill of particulars against George Bush for his sins. It has continually run articles critical of presidential capitulations on budget matters, civil rights and clean air legislation, foreign affairs; it has been equally firm in its defence of Reagan's policies, especially the tax policies ritually condemned by the Democrats and the media's celebrity journalists. The magazine noted, for example, that after tax income for the poor has actually increased as a result of Reagan policies (see *National Review*, 1 April, 1991, p.15) and that the rich did not become richer as a result of the Reagan years, but simply reported more of their previously 'sheltered' income, points one would not expect to hear on the evening television news. They remarked that even without the Savings and Loan (building societies) rescue programme, worth $150 billion and still counting, Mr. Bush's domestic spending increased at 8.2%, or more than twice the inflation rate. This juxtaposition of defending Reagan's (read true conservative) policies, while criticizing those of the incumbent, emphasizes the distance between Reagan's programmatic conservatism and Bush's pragmatic Republicanism. Reagan, the conservatives add, was able to accomplish his goals in spite of having a sympathetic majority in only one House

of the Congress for only two of his eight years.

The bipartisan president goes through rituals of paying obeisance to the conservatives, such as his annual address to the anti-abortion rally on the anniversary of the Supreme Court decision that found abortions to be consonant with constitutional principles, his request for a line-item veto on legislation, especially budget legislation, the fulsome praise of free trade, and his defence of a capital gains tax reduction.

The defence of the last was particularly feeble: he had allowed the Democrats to condemn the reduction as a singularly undesirable form of welfare for the rich. It was only in his fourth annual State of the Union address that he noted, with as much force as he can muster, that 60% of the beneficiaries have total incomes under $5,000. He had hitherto declined to point out that anyone selling a single share of common stock or selling a house would benefit. He allowed the Democrats and the media to portray him as a rich man using his presidency to benefit other rich men.

Despite efforts to craft a masterpiece, George Will even found the most recent State of the Union address wanting, an address that was supposed to be the metaphorical equivalent of going to Canossa, manifesting both repentance and renewed commitment. The president, he suggested, did not offer the principled programme the country and his party need. Too many of the proposals were retreads from earlier addresses and assorted appeals to the Congress. Mr. Doug Bandow of the Cato Institute concludes that George Bush 'is unconcerned with where America ends up'.

Not all Bush critics emanate from policy research organizations or writers. A generous portion of the dissonance within the Republican Party derives from sociological, as much as from political, reasons. Many of the people and groups criticizing Bush for his weakness (wimpiness in the jargon of the right flank) and lack of direction have their roots in what might be called the American *petite bourgeoisie,* to use a term from the lexicon of a discredited political system. These people were traditionally conservative on moral issues like pornography, divorce, and sexual mores; they favoured prayer in State schools, opposed abortion, and the forced bussing of schoolchildren from their home district to another in order to achieve the nebulous goal of statistical racial balance. They favoured restricted immigration to reduce competition for jobs. Prior to the 1950s, they could be found in both political parties, because their values were enshrined in national and local tradition, in short, the conventional moral wisdom. The views were shared by both parties. The Supreme Court had not yet ruled any of them out of order. By the end of the 1960s, the Democratic Party, seeking political advantage, came to be associated with radical reform, which deviated from the received traditions. That portion of the Democratic electorate that still supported traditional morality felt constrained to move to the Republican party.

During the 1970s, this group at once expanded and became more sophisticated, it received leadership from people who made conservatism a respectable intellectual study; it became sufficiently large to be a critical

component of the Reagan election victory in 1980. The core group, however, did not willingly abandon its distaste for foreign aid or for helping to defend nations that did not express sufficient gratitude for such assistance, or support economic or foreign policy initiatives. It is to this group that Mr. Buchanan appeals. He does not want to defend allies that are both rich and ungrateful for past help. This dilution of the conservative philosophy into populist neo-isolationism will probably not outlast the campaign season. The far more numerous segment of informed conservative opinion is internationalist, recognizes great power responsibilities, and is less dependent on single issues or the politics of bitterness expressed by Mr. Buchanan's evanescent coalition. This group of conservatives, whose political beliefs derive from post-World War II thinkers like James Burnham, Russell Kirk and William F. Buckley, came of age during the political campaign of Barry Goldwater, is probably the most influential segment of American conservatism.

These post-war conservative traditionalists, the Protestant Evangelicals, who contributed to the tapestry of Reagan's 1980 election, the converted liberals (often called neo-conservatives, who provide an occasional point of irritation because of their disproportionate representation in the Bush administration), and the radio audience of young, politically thoughtful conservatives, must be satisfied with the manifesto of a re-committed candidate for them to play a meaningful role in the campaign.

Despite their lack of enthusiasm for the president in the 'Super Tuesday' and other primaries, conservatives will, in the end, support Mr. Bush against whoever carries the Democratic banner in the general election. Once before, organized conservatism threatened to withhold support from an incumbent Republican president running for a second term. The radicalism of Richard Nixon's Democratic opponent in 1972, however, made any real alternative to Nixon ludicrous.

Conservatives will choose Mr. Bush *faute de mieux*. They will be content to send him a strong message of dissatisfaction in the pre-convention season. If Mr. Bush loses the election, they know that an army of Democratic political appointees in the federal bureaucracy will be a source of endless torment to them, more than pragmatic businessmen or neo-conservatives. They appreciate, more importantly, that a Democratic president will cease appointing conservative jurists to the federal courts and especially to the Supreme Court. Even Patrick Buchanan accepts this proposition.

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# INSIDER TRADING ON GERMAN STOCK MARKETS

## by Michael Olshausen

GERMANS have not always been good at policing their worst impulses. When a German banker explains that voluntary restraints, rather than legal sanctions, will safeguard the German capital markets against insider stock trading, a British or American audience may be forgiven for reacting with genuine scepticism. Isn't this German banker rather like the British Medical Association or the Los Angeles County Police Chief in wishing to avoid public oversight? What, precisely, is the German hiding? Or could he, perhaps, be correct about voluntary restraints on insider trading? What expertise, or historical experience, or perhaps barest iota of arrogance leads this German banker to plump so single-mindedly for voluntary restraints?

'Insider Trading' occurs when a buyer or seller of stock executes a trade on the basis of knowledge not available to the public, which knowledge, if it were to be made available, would cause the price of the traded stock to change abruptly. A member of the Board of Directors, in Germany the 'Aufsichtsrat,' would certainly count as an insider. Likewise, a member of the 'Vorstand,' the top-level executive management, also has access, as part of his work, to confidential information about his company. He may know, for example, that his company is about to take over another company through a tender-offer for that company's stock. If, in this example, he purchased stock in the target company before the takeover news became generally known, he could then sell his stock following a news release and pocket the profit. Or, he may know that his company is about to reduce its stock dividend after losing market share. If he is a stockholder and sells his stock on the open market before the dividend announcement, he avoids a loss, passing the misfortune on to somebody else. In either example, this privileged stockholder has engaged in insider trading. The question is, what to do about it? The staggering cost of recent 'Insider Trading' cases in Britain has led some British legal experts to question the ability of a jury to understand such complicated issues. In February, a £40 million trial for a city scandal resulted in but a few suspended sentences.

Insider Trading, it should be stressed, does create victims. For though one may plausibly argue, in the case of buying stock ahead of a price rise, that no one, in fact, gets hurt, because the seller merely sells what he was disposed to sell, and therefore loses no money out of pocket, such an argument is actually an evasion. The disposition to sell is, after all, generally contingent on the belief that the value of a security isn't about to rise.

In the opposite circumstance, when stock is sold ahead of a price decline, the victimization is more obvious, since price declines based on 'hot' information tend to be precipitous. The problem, then, about 'doing something' about insider trading, is not that there are no victims, but

that, in an anonymous and random open market, where sellers and buyers almost never meet, it may be impossible to identify the victims, or, if it were possible, to limit the number of potential claimants (Hall, 1981). In all but the most egregious cases, such as those of Ivan Boesky or Michael Milken in the United States or the recent Guiness trials in Britain, the eventual administrative costs of being just to the victims may far exceed the compensation distributed to them. Indeed, if every splinter claim had to be compensated, most garden-variety, insider traders would be unable to pay the large fines required to cover the attendant, administrative costs (Hopt, 1986). Unfair though this may seem, it is a blunt fact of market life.

Since 1970, the steadfast German approach has been to write voluntary Insider Trading Guidelines, which parties then contract with each other to respect. These voluntary German Guidelines were first implemented in 1971 (Hopt, 1986), were enlarged in 1976, and had to be expanded yet again in 1988 (*The Economist*, 1989).

Typically, the contracting parties are the companies whose stocks may be traded, and the stock-trading entities, principally the German banks, but stock brokerages, as well. For members of mid-level management and the Vorstand, the Guidelines 'are usually a part of the original contract of employment'; for members of the Aufsichtsrat, where no employment contract exists, 'a special agreement is made' (Hopt, 1986).

German securities professionals allege good reasons for retaining the voluntary system of compliance with the Insider Trading Guidelines. With real conviction, they believe, that:

1. The few who 'contrive to carry out insider trading' will not be deterred by the 'much delayed attack of the public prosecutor and a ponderous court case';
2. The uncertainty of the success of such a law would not justify the burdens it would impose on the German stock exchanges and capital markets;
3. The expense and effort 'to reach the last five per cent of faultlessness' would prove disproportionately high, and the cost 'to reach one hundred per cent' compliance would prove prohibitive (Hopt, 1986).

Dr. Rüdiger von Rosen, executive vice chairman, Federation of the German Stock Exchanges, in an interview about the many allegations of insider trading in Germany, offered this truthful, but overly-defensive response: 'You in America already have such a law, but you are the ones with Ivan Boesky (von Rosen, 1991).

In the Federal Republic of Germany, insider trading is not illegal 'or even subject to civil sanctions' (Sturz, 1990). Only the voluntary Guidelines limit insider behaviour. Insiders are defined by the Guidelines as:

1. legal representatives and members of the supervisory board [Aufsichtsrat] of the company;
2. legal representatives and members of the supervisory board of connected domestic companies, unless they do not usually obtain knowledge of inside information in this capacity;

3. domestic shareholders . . . *where they have more than 25% interest in the company* [italics added];
4. employees of the company, of the domestic companies connected with it and the domestic shareholders with more than 25% interest in it, insofar as the employees usually obtain knowledge of inside information in this capacity (Sturz, 1990); and
5. credit banks and their supervisory board members, directors, and informed employees (Hopt, 1986).

The expansion of the Guidelines in 1988 added financial advisors and consultants, and bank credit departments to the list of acknowledged insiders (*Wall Street Journal*, 1988).

Insider information itself is exclusively defined by the Guidelines as knowledge of:

a. changes in dividend rates;
b. substantial changes in earnings or facts which may influence such earnings;
c. actions taken to reduce or raise capital, including the raising of capital from corporate sources;
d. conclusion of a direct-control contract or profit-sharing agreement;
e. takeover and settlement offers;
f. planned mergers, amalgamations, transfers of assets and reorganizations; and
g. dissolution of the company (Blum, 1986).

Apart from transactions arising from the insiders and insider information enumerated above, the Guidelines contain several, explicit exceptions:

1. transactions made as a result of instructions exempt the participant, though not the instructor.
2. transactions within the framework of the objectives of the company set out in the articles of incorporation [e.g. the legitimate, planned takeover of another company].
3. transactions in furtherance of clients' interests or within the framework of otherwise normal trading in securities of the credit bank (Hopt, 1986).

Significantly, tacit exceptions are made for 'overseas parent and subsidiary companies,' and for 'receivers of tips' (Hopt, 1986). It is this final exception that causes the most concern among foreign observers.

Because the Guidelines are voluntary, it is the German corporations themselves, rather than the government, that determine who is to be considered an insider and when to initiate an investigatory process. Such procedures are the very opposite of those in America and Great Britain.

Significant, perhaps, in the foregoing discussion, from a cultural viewpoint, is that the creating of lists, such as those lists just presented, appears to be taken by Germans to be an exclusive act; whereas, to Americans and Englishmen, lists are normally seen to be merely exemplary, with broad general rules actually governing. One is tempted to interpret the apparent German view that lists are exhaustive as an expression of loathing

for granting broad, vaguely worded powers to a central government. If true, this conclusion would be understandable, given German history.

In the United States, securities trading is regulated at the federal level by the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC) acting under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Insider Trading is provided for specifically by Sections 10 and 16(b) of the Act, and Rule 10b-5, promulgated by the SEC under Section 10 (Noack, 1987). Insider trading under Rule 10b-5 is a criminal offence, punishable by fine, or imprisonment, or both. Indeed, the largest fine ever levied in US history, against Michael Milken for 600 million dollars, arose in an insider trading action. The SEC, furthermore, has full competence to investigate insider trading on every US securities exchange — including the New York and American Stock Exchanges and the NASDAQ, as well as the regional stock exchanges, such as those in Boston or Philadelphia — and to file suit on behalf of the federal government against suspected insider traders.

In Germany, by contrast, it is not the Bonn/Berlin federal government, but rather the Länder, such as Bavaria or North Rhein-Westfalia, that supervise the stock exchanges. Oversight is therefore fragmented along the fault-lines of traditional, intra-German sovereignty, predating Bismark. All eight stock exchanges — Frankfurt (the largest), Düsseldorf, Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, Hannover, Stuttgart and Bremen — are thus regulated by separate authorities.

There is, it should be noted, a federal, German regulatory statute called the Stock Exchange Law, which applies to companies traded on the eight stock exchanges, and which defines rather broad reporting duties incumbent on all German corporations: 'the legally required annual publication of the balance sheet, the profit and loss statement, and the business report.' The Stock Exchange Law further contains 'certain provisions protecting the rights of minority shareholders [e.g. the ability to sue for avoidance of resolutions passed at shareholders' meetings]' (Schwark, 1978), yet it clearly fails to address insider trading. The federal Stock Corporation Act does prohibit 'violation and exploitation of business secrets by members of the executive board [Vorstand] and the supervisory board [Aufsichtsrat], liquidators, auditors, and their assistants,' and its 'authorized sanctions' do 'include fine or imprisonment,' yet litigation 'arises exclusively in cases where a complaint is made by the [affected] company itself' (Hopt, 1986). In fact, at the federal level, no German law specifically addresses insider trading. Oversight devolves entirely upon the Länder.

In 1988, a few months after the most recent tightening of the Guidelines, 'there were massive and prescient sales of Klöckner participation notes on the Düsseldorf stock exchange. The company then announced a huge (and generally unexpected) loss on its oil trading activities' (*The Economist*, 1989). When such 'prescience' strongly hints at insider trading, a Board of Review of the relevant Land may initiate an inquiry. This Board of Review includes four assessors and a chairman, who is a commercial law judge nominated by the President of the relevant Oberlandesgericht, the Land's high court (Hopt, 1986). The remaining members are elected

by representatives of the leading commercial federations associated with the exchange (Blum, 1986).

Although its role is exclusively advisory, the Board of Review, once a denunciation '(including a self-denunciation)' (Hopt, 1986) has been made, has surprisingly strong investigative powers. It may even compel suspects to waive their right of privacy under Germany's strict bank secrecy laws (Noack, 1987). The Board, through its appointed auditors, accountants, and co-operating managers of the company whose stock is alleged to have been insider traded, gathers facts and subsequently issues an opinion as to whether the Guidelines have been violated, whether this can be proved, 'and whether and to what extent costs should be awarded' (Hopt, 1986). The Board, however, does not determine what legal claims might be supported, since insider trading violates no German law. It violates, instead, the contract terms voluntarily entered into by nearly all large, publicly-traded German companies (70% of them, representing some 90% of all securities transactions (Sturz, 1990)) and their insider employees, as well as by all German banks. Suits for breach of contact thus provide the only enforcement leverage for the voluntary Guidelines, apart from allegedly sufficient peer pressure to refrain from insider trading.

The principal sanction provided by the Guidelines is disgorgement and turning over of the unjust profits, or the avoided losses, to the company whose stock was traded (Hopt, 1986). Because insider trading is not illegal in Germany, nor actionable in tort, profits gained from, or losses passed on to, unwitting investors in the open market cannot be recovered, even in principal, through a class-action lawsuit brought by the affected investors. And although in serious cases, 'publication of the case could be made without the consent of the insider' (Hopt, 1986), in practice the suspect may delay or even prevent publication through a court order. Germany is not a free-speech country in the American sense, and prior restraint may therefore occur. In fact, 'West German law actually prohibits both the asserton of less than fully substantiated claims *and questioning of an opposing party to obtain information substantiating those claims* [italics added]' (Noack, 1987). This, of course, may too be understandable, from an historical perspective. For the sake of day-to-day, social harmony in a country with the world's worst twentieth-century history, suppressing the urge to accuse may actually be beneficial.

In sum, then, the typical German small- or medium-size investor, unlike his American or British counterpart, enjoys no legal protection against insider trading. In fact, German investors who hold less than 25% of the stock in a company, in practice nearly all of them, are exempted by the Guidelines. Yet the protections that Americans are said to enjoy often have turned out, as Dr. von Rosen implies, to be illusory, to be no protections at all. 'Insider trading has always been prevalent on Wall Street' (Zemser, 1990). Does this mean, then, that the German system of professional peer pressure is the superior system, in its practical, if not in its moral, effect? The answer may actually be 'yes, but'.

But in fact, there are three 'buts', since to accept the German system means to arouse three forms of discontent that are themselves probably insupportable. These social predicaments are the prices to be paid for insisting that public oversight is not really necessary.

Germans have relatively little interest in owning shares in their companies. After World War Two, citizen participation in the financial system, especially 'widely distributed capital ownership', was encouraged by the United States and Great Britain in order to stabilize the country. 'Public participation in German stock markets reached its peak in the mid-1960s' (Blum, 1986), only to decline after a series of revelations (Hopt, 1986) about insider dealings, revelations which led to the 1970 drafting of the first set of insider-trading Guidelines. For various, tax-related reasons unnecessary to detail here, but also because of the 'widely held belief that the markets are, to some extent "fixed;" ... that insiders and speculators retain significant advantage over the common investor' (Blum, 1986), Germans tend to shun capital ownership, compared to their American, British, or Canadian counterparts. Yet today, when German national cohesion is vital for rebuilding the Communist-mismanaged East Germany, this is arguably not a healthy trend. An aging West German society that prefers to live off interest-bearing securities may not have a strong enough vested interest in the employment of capital to cope well with the strife engendered by joblessness.

The remaining polarizations aggravated by the German stance on insider trading are external and multilateral. They involve, on the one hand, the EEC and, on the other, the United States.

The Treaty of Rome establishing the EEC in 1957 cited 'movement of capital as one of the four basic freedoms within the Community'. With world war still raw in their memory, the signatories presumably felt that any people who could withdraw funds to a safe haven could not easily be held captive. In addition, capital able to move meant capital's more efficient employment in promising ventures in a Europe that was still rebuilding. But 'interpenetration', this deliberately constructed, mutual dependence, required a more-or-less 'level playing field' in the capital markets, a requirement that still exists thirty years later. With the rapid approach of the probably-too-much-heralded 1992 Economic Unification of Europe, a perceived 'wide divergence in the ... fairness of national markets' (Blum, 1986) only creates divisiveness where accord should be the aim. To this end, in June 1985, the EEC convened The Working Party of the Committee of Experts on Insider Trading to draft common rules, these common rules to take effect by law throughout the EEC by the end of 1990. The Germans, who have thus far avoided implementing these common rules are seen to be 'increasingly isolated on [the] issue' (*The Economist,* 1989), as they drag their feet vis-a-vis their EEC partners. And there has been a fear, that a 'lack of uniformity [in criminalizing insider trading] could create an unworkable environment, or even total breakdown in the future' (Zemser, 1990).

Yet Germany will soon criminalize insider trading, or so, at least, one

is led to believe. Despite his evident exasperation with his American interlocutor's questions, Dr. von Rosen did recently affirm that Germany will criminalize the practice 'in 1992' (von Rosen, 1991). The plan just announced by German Finance Minister Theo Waigel, to make 'insider trading punishable with up to two years imprisonment' (Parkes, 1992), would seem to ratify Dr. von Rosen's earlier prediction. Action, however, by the Bundestag is still wanting.

The German position on insider trading is also a source of friction with the United States, where insider trading is illegal. Although, in most respects, Germany's voluntary Guidelines 'are similar to American securities regulations' (Noack, 1987), they differ entirely on the issue of tippee trading. This practice occurs when a trader, called the 'tippee,' possibly unconnected to the company whose stock he trades, trades on insider information acquired from a well-placed source, his 'tipper'. Under the German Insider Guidelines 'a tippee is not liable... and a tipper is liable only when a tippee acts on the tipper's behalf' (Noack, 1987). In Germany today, information purchased by a tippee may be used by him for his own gain without his incurring any risk of penalty under the German rules. A family member acting on insider information provided informally at a family reunion would also risk no penalty under the existing German rules. Both circumstances contradict American law. SEC Rule 10b-5, as recently adjudicated, extends 'to tippees whose liability is derivative from insiders owing a fiduciary duty' (Noack, 1987) to the company whose shares were traded.

Germany continues to pose an 'acute' (Noack, 1987) problem from the point of view of SEC investigations, because the Federal Republic has bank secrecy laws while refusing, simultaneously, to consider insider trading a crime. Yet German nationals using insider information and trading US securities through offshore banks and brokerages create their victims in the United States. Were the Federal Republic to consider insider trading a crime, an appeal by the SEC to a German court to compel bank disclosure of suspect trading activities would be probably granted. In fact, most countries, Germany among them, honour law enforcement requests from countries with which they have treaty obligations, provided the activity being investigated is also a crime at home. When the opposite is the case, when the activity is legal, honouring such a request almost universally is regarded as an intolerable compromise of national sovereignty.

As it happens, most large German banks have branches in the United States, principally in New York. As a result, the SEC has the power to sue such a branch in US District Court and thereby to obtain a discovery order, which, if the branch refuses to honour it, could lead to a contempt of court order against the German bank's US branch officers. On the other hand, complying with the court's order 'would subject the bank to civil liability in Germany' (Noack, 1987) for breaching Germany's bank secrecy laws. So, there is a dilemma. The German parent bank is damned if it does, and its American employees are damned if it does not. Meanwhile,

the SEC's investigations drag on, and the urge to drop difficult cases grows. Nobody is satisfied.

From the Germans' point of view, the Americans want too much and are being pushy. If the Americans cannot rid their own, heavily regulated securities' market of corruption, why should the Germans listen to the Americans' complaints? From the American point of view, a disproportionate amount of insider trading on Wall Street originates from offshore-entities taking advantage of America's open market. The Germans are part of the problem, so why shouldn't the SEC lean on them?

These external polarizations — between the Federal Republic and the EEC and the Federal Republic and the United States — will undoubtedly be resolved not in Germany's favour. Strong, and arrogant, and possibly technically right as it may be on the merits of voluntary restraints, Germany is technically wrong on the issue, from a larger perspective. A nation that derives the lion's share of its GNP from exports cannot afford to sour its multilateral relations over this or any other issue affecting relatively few people at home, however entrenched they may be in the financial inner circles.

By the end of 1992, Germany will therefore almost certainly be dragged into the messy, wider world of 'financially responsible' nations.

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[Michael Olshausen, a consultant in German-American trade, has adapted this article from a seminar he gave at the US Department of Agriculture.]

# THE SOVIET INHERITANCE

## by Leo Muray

THE sequence of changes in the late Soviet Union, some at first sight positive and fundamental, has, inevitably, distracted attention from many, too many perhaps, problems — legal, political and practical, that merit this attention. The Commonwealth of Independent States, is stillborn, the term Commonwealth itself, hardly understood in these countries, having been picked deliberately to convey the vagueness of the Association. It meant, in essence, to leave it to each state, it is worth pointing out that the term Republic was not used, to fix its relations with each other and with the world outside.

The Russian Federation has claimed the right of succession to the Soviet Union in existing treaties and arrangements and has been granted the permanent seat in the UN Security Council. This was a free act of the other members and of the UN. Since the Soviet Union does not exist any longer and that Commonwealth has never been a legal international body every government has in theory, and increasingly in practice, been freed of obligations entered into in past treaties, or arrangements, with the Soviet Union if it chooses to. The signatories of the Conference of Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE,), have accepted all eleven members of that CIS as members, including those in Central Asia. But this was a free political decision.

The late Soviet Union has, of course, made dozens of treaties; the Treaties of Friendship with eight Third World countries, for instance, and the treaties with Cuba. But all these have lapsed and have to be renegotiated if the two partners want it, that is. It is obvious, however, that, say Kazakhstan, is unlikely to be interested in a treaty with Angola. India for instance, is now keenly interested in a treaty setting up military co-operation with the US. The 35-year-old Defence Treaty with the Soviet Union is no more and the Russian Federation is not now considered a worthwhile partner.

Russia, for example, had to make a new treaty with Finland, replacing that imposed on Finland immediately after World War II that gave the Soviet partner rights to supervise Finland's foreign, defence and economic policy. Finland is only now fully able to become a member of the European Community. Russia, which has profited from being granted possession of a considerable slice of Eastern Finland, including the ancient city of Viipuri, is now free of restrictions.

Austria is another case. Austria's neutrality is partly due to Soviet insistence in 1955 when the State Treaty was signed. It is now much easier for Austria to become a member of the European Community with its steady progress towards a European Defence Treaty.

The case of Japan is different. Japan had steadily refused to make a peace treaty with the Soviet Union unless the four Kurile Islands, north of Japan, were returned by Moscow. Since the Soviet Union is no more there

is no need for a peace treaty. But Japan, its deputy Foreign Minister, Saito, has stated, will not approve of the basic economic aid to the 'Commonwealth' the G7 countries, the big industrial countries, (Japan, US, Germany, France, Canada, UK and Italy) want to arrange urgently. It is also, so far, not co-operating in the granting of full membership of the International Monetary Fund, IMF, President Bush is arguing for. Russia is asked to commit itself to start negotiations for the return of the islands.

An issue, only whispered about in the corridors of diplomacy, are borders. The eleven CIS governments have agreed to recognize the present borders with each other. This on the insistence of Ukraine and Kazakhstan. It is an extremely sensitive issue, largely because the borders were drawn by the Kremlin. The most controversial, of course, is the Russian-Ukrainian border, because Khrushchev in 1954, by a simple decree, added the Crimea with its key naval bases to the Ukraine. Most of the inhabitants, who are Russian, want to go back to Mother Russia. Then the Black Sea Fleet with its base at Sabastopol would come under a Russian and not Ukrainian authority and the ebullient Ukrainian president would not have much say about the fleet.

Borders in the Caucasus and Central Asia are partly historic borders recognizing ancient national and tribal dividing lines and partly decreed by the Kremlin like the attachment of the Armenian Nagorno-Karabakh enclave to Azerbaidjan in 1923 that has caused the fighting from which the Russians have now withdrawn.

Another conflict may arise from Stalin's decision to attach a significant stretch of land peopled by Russians to the Moldava Republic with its Romanian majority. This land is along the eastern bank of the Dniester river and the people there want to secede from Moldava. A 'Trans-Dniester Independent Republic' has been proclaimed and fighting has started. The Russian Federation is bound eventually to support 'Trans-Dniester' and Ukraine most likely as well. It is now on its border.

The new borders of the Russian Federation are of major significance. Russia has now only borders with Finland and Norway as far as Western countries are concerned. It has no borders with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania, its former 'satellites'. The independent Belorus, Ukraine and Moldava republics are inbetween. It has, after 250 dramatic years, no border with Turkey either, or with Iran and Afghanistan. Then there is the border with China. It was 4,000 miles long. But now it starts only east of the border with Mongolia since Kazakhstan stretches to the western end of the Mongolia border leaving Iran and Afghanistan with borders with the Central Asian Republics only.

The Chinese border has long been an emotionally controversial issue between Moscow and Peking. Tsarist Russia obtained recognition of its sovereignty over the vast regions of Siberia from a feebled Chinese Emperor in the Treaty of Nerchinsk in 1689. Maoist China regarded that treaty as an Imperialist outrage. It even published maps showing the key port of Vladivostock with a Chinese name. Only in the last years of the

Breshnev regime did Peking recognize that treaty. But the Soviet partner is no more and China is perfectly entitled to ask for a new treaty. The old agreement also fixed the number of troops along the border. Now China has a border with Kirgyzstan and Kazakhstan as well. Younger Chinese men of status are hinting in a friendly manner that soon negotiations might be asked for.

The borders with Poland and Ukraine are sensitive ones. The well known enclave of Kaliningrad, Prussia's ancient capital where Kant, the philosopher was born, became a Russian territory by Stalin's decree in 1945 although it can only be reached by land through Lithuania and what are now Belorus and Poland. Kaliningrad is a key naval base on the Baltic. There appears to be an informal agreement by the four countries concerned that Russian supplies are being let through. But there are occasional hold-ups. The problem is that Russia will have to make long-term agreements with Belorus in the first place and with the two, or at least one, non-member of the CIS, Lithuania and Poland, to maintain the vital transport links by land. They will cost money and concessions. This has already raised the question of the future of the enclave.

Belorus now borders on Poland. That border is the result of World War II. Again, Stalin annexed sizeable regions of eastern Poland to Belorus at the end of the war with the approval of President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, the latter not too happy because, after all, Britain went to war to defend Poland which got the Oder-Neisse line as its western border in exchange. Again, post-war Poland accepted the present border with what was then the Soviet Union. Now Belorus is independent and out to get its own army. Poland may be tempted to ask for a change if Russia is weak.

The Ukraine borders are equally sensitive. The Western Ukraine, that took the lead in the struggle for independence against Russia with Lvov as its capital, was Polish for centuries and then Austrian. Again, its south-west was once part of Hungary and then the 'Carpatho-Ukraine' region of Czechoslovakia between the two World Wars. In theory any of these countries may ask for new negotiations. The Ukrainian president, Kravchuk, has already declared that his country must also be regarded as the successor of the Soviet Union in these treaties just as Russia is in the Security Council.

Turning to Central Asia recent developments have shown, not surprisingly, that the neighbours of these republics, Turkey, Iran and Pakistan, are determined to detach these republics from that 'Commonwealth'. They want them to join their new organizations aimed at setting up something like the Common Market. Turkey is playing the leading role since the present government is anxious to preserve the secular character of the countries which are all anxious to create a new, real identity. Turkey wants them to adopt the Latin alphabet while strong Islamic forces, backed by Iran, want them to return to the old Arabic. Turkey is in a strong position. Because of its membership of NATO, and of associate membership of Western economic organizations, it can make

full use of its unique geographical position as the most direct land link between the Western world and the newly independent Central Asian republics.

As the struggle for the Crimea shows there are border problems affecting relations inside the 'Commonwealth'. Ukraine, in fact, like Belorus, is a new country with a recognized national identity but not with ancient recognized borders. This is, inevitably, linked, possibly dangerously, with the existence of ethnic minorities in almost all of the countries. There are around 25 million Russians resident in the other republics, twelve million in Ukraine and six million in Belorus, with a total population respectively of around 52 and ten millions. Of Kazakhstan's 16 million 41% are Russian and 41% Kazakhs. Kazakh leaders are therefore keen on continuing to co-operate with Russia.

The growing loss of control on the ground in every sector of the community in most republics was best illustrated by the recent extraordinary direct appeal to nuclear scientists and technicians by US Secretary Baker on his recent visit to Central Asia to co-operate with the West and take direct employment if possible. In this he left out the governments.

The ethnic minority issue is overshadowed for the time being by the economic problems. Ukraine, for instance, insists on a proper share of the gold and hard currencies held in Moscow. It demands 16.37% of what were the Soviet assets and is therefore prepared to pay, in due course, 16.37% of the current £39 billion Soviet debts. Other republics are negotiating. The savagely devalued rouble is another problem. The republics are not getting enough of the newly printed money, with roaring inflation pushing up the demand, especially when wages and salaries are being increased. Here there are moves in the background to encourage the Central Asian Moslem republics to accept discreet proposals by the governments of Moslem oil countries to go on their own with the help of oil money.

As for old allies like Cuba and Angola, who received cheap Soviet oil, the disappearance of the Soviet Union has created serious problems. Whom are they to pay their debts to? And in what currency? And at what exchange rate? If the debtor governments were to insist on the present actual exchange rate with the US Dollar or any other Western currency for their debts of the past, repayment would be nearly symbolic. Agreement, therefore, on the actual sums to be paid will be hard to get, as will the sharing out between the Commonwealth States. The Russian Federation remains the chief lender but the other republics, also desperately short of money as well as hard currencies, will demand their share. The Russians would have to agree on how to divide it up and all the eleven would have to commit themselves to making no further demands. The agreed withdrawal of the troops in Eastern Germany and of the forgotten brigade in Cuba has to be financed. The Germans are prepared to do their bit. But with the setting up of separate, independent armies in the republics the question arises as to under which

command these two forces will be since their withdrawal is taking time and who will pay them until they are back.

All this must be seen also against the background of the totally unresolved problem of the control of nuclear weapons, tactical and strategic. It is not at all clear, for instance, by whom the line is drawn between tactical and strategic weapons. Governments that have them appear to be inclined to keep the tactical ones. But nuclear technicians are revealing alarming facts about the rapid deterioration of nuclear plants and stores due to lack of equipment, money and proper storage facilities. They warn that Chernobyls are likely at any time. Control of nuclear stations and storage institutions by the governments that are expected to sign such agreements is likely to prove fictitious. And this, one is told, applies too to any conventional disarmament agreements. It is lack of control and the almost complete freedom of action of officials and bureaucrats on the spot, former communists, who act in their own personal interests — as many of them have done since Gorbachev came to power, that is at present the main political factor in a perplexing situation.

The May number of *Contemporary Review* includes: *The Foreign Relations and Foreign Policy of Spain: a Survey for 1992. Part Three: Spain, the United States and NATO* by Anthony Gooch and *Slovenia Faces the Future* by Gorazd Bohte.

# A GUEST OF NORTHERN IRELAND

## by Stephen M. Williams

LAST night I found my head swimming with images of Northern Ireland. I had used the repeat command for a track on a compilation CD I had just borrowed from the town library. The music was calling me away. In fact a look at the sleeve notes showed that it was an arrangement by George Weldon of a traditional Welsh cradle song 'Suo Gan'. But Celtic at least — Celtic.

When I crossed the water to take a lecturing job at the New University of Ulster (motto: 'To Build Anew') I felt I was teetering on the edge of disintegration. I owned a carpet bag. I crossed back to a nice house, with a wife, two children, a research doctorate, and a list of learned publications long enough to defeat any but an academic from even reading it. I started the job two days before Mrs. Thatcher swept to power in 1979. The return journey preceded her fall by a few months. I can claim to be strikingly 'un-Thatcherised', which makes me, from what I see round about, something different.

Oddly, my musings on what I have left behind were mingled with memories of the several television dramas located in Ulster which I have dutifully sat through. Either Art is more real than Life or else the strains of Suo Gan reminded me of so many music-over 'mood-setters' in the same vein. My own experience as an Anglo in the province is of a terrifically ordinary place, completely albeit Celtically normal. Except of course for the Troubles; the unspeakable, shame-sodden, heartbreaking Troubles. I arrived in the Triangle area of the north coast with no more first-hand knowledge of the area than my previous visit for interview. All I brought second-hand from the media was a confused impression of incredibly regular atrocities, not so much incomprehensible as too remote to have been worth the pain of comprehending.

A great-grandmother was Amy Collins, aunt of the great Michael, and this family connection had given me some interest in the history of Home Rule. Michael Collins, the first *Taoiseach* (prime minister of the Irish Republic), played, I firmly believed, the dominating role in the Irish War of Independence. A revolutionary of all parts — general, diplomat and chief of intelligence — he was the pragmatist who accepted the insistence of Lloyd George and Churchill that Ulster had a separate identity. For which he paid to Irishmen who wanted everything at once the price — a bullet in the head. Eamonn de Valera, 'the long man', stepped into his shoes and ensured that his country would always regard Ulster as a final instalment still to be paid.

Hazily, I had some conviction too that this sort of violence is always the product of oppression and repression, the frenzy of an animal backed into a corner.

A colleague put me up while I looked for accommodation and I asked his advice about the Northern Ireland parties. From him I heard for the

first time about the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland, and I remain convinced that they alone among the local parties offer a hope of peace. About the pressures on these men in the middle I have had no doubts since the former leader of Alliance, John Cushnahan, arrived to address a party meeting utterly nerve-jangled from a session of the Northern Ireland Assembly. At that meeting he enunciated his party's principles, of Unionism and non-sectarianism.

I myself came to believe the local parties are too small to offer the people enough reassurance that the course of events on the territorial issue will not be dictated by violence. I joined the Social Democratic Party. The SDP was the first mainland British party to have the courage and decency to field candidates in Northern Ireland, but membership in Northern Ireland never reached three figures and now that hope too seems gone.

At the moment the men of violence have begun the British General Election campaign in their traditional way. A spurt of very ugly, because so nakedly sectarian, violence has followed a Christmas cease-fire in the province. There have been several incidents on the mainland as well. The Northern Ireland politicians have agreed to immediate cross-party talks, a signal achievement. But they will surely be awaiting the outcome of the Election before biting the bullet of 'power-sharing'.

It is a commonplace to assert that no family in Northern Ireland has remained untouched by violence as the Troubles approach their first quarter-century anniversary. As an outsider I have been lucky in this respect, but two atrocities affected me particularly deeply. A student I taught in Derry, Leslie Jarvis, was shot as he came out of an evening class and his body used as bait to blow up two policemen. Made redundant in his early fifties, he had taken a job in the education service of Magilligan prison, enough to make him, in the revolting parlance, a 'legitimate target'. And a lecturer on our Jordanstown campus was blown up and killed along with six policemen he was giving continuing education in sociology. One more horror haunts me — the deaths before I arrived to live in Coleraine of six people in an incendiary bombing there. The six included a baby and a shopgirl, and like the townspeople who have spoken to me of it I shall never forget the manner of their dying.

I am leaving my desk to listen to Suo Gan.

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# D. H. LAWRENCE'S NEW MEXICO

by Bidhu Padhi

THE First World War was a severely depressing experience for D. H. Lawrence. It sharpened his innate hatred of the 'civilised' way of life; it produced in him a feeling which was very close to 'revolutionary'. The consequent sense of frustration is well defined in his desire to 'sail away from this world of war and squalor and found a little colony... which is established upon the assumption of goodness in the members, instead of the assumption of badness.[1] The war ultimately led to a slow realization of the idea of the New World that had been occurring to his sensitive mind off and on. His many journeys — to Europe, Australia, Ceylon and America — were only real-life explorations into the nature and quality of that New World — something that he had also artistically visualized in each of his novels and stories. Ursula, at the end of *The Rainbow*, had seen in the 'rainbow earth's new architecture, the old, brittle corruption of houses and factories swept away, the world built up in a living fabric of Truth, fitting to the over-arching heaven.'[2] Lawrence's later protagonists — Aaron in *Aaron's Rod*, Somers in *Kangaroo*, Kate Leslie in *The Plumed Serpent*, the unnamed woman in *The Woman Who Rode Away*, and Connie in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* — were to explore further into the 'new creation' whose first signs Ursula sat watching at the close of *The Rainbow*.

Lawrence's travels took him to Italy, where he found a good setting for *Aaron's Rod*; to Australia, where he found a virgin ground for *Kangaroo;* and to Mexico — both Old and New — where he found material for *The Plumed Serpent*, *The Woman Who Rode Away*, and *The Princess*. New Mexico, apart from giving him his three stories, also fulfilled many of his cherished dreams. Its landscapes and its religion put him in direct and immediate contact with what he would have called the 'living universe'; they showed him the magic and mystery which he always associated with everything primitive and ancient. Although, initially, he found it 'a weird country' where he felt like 'a great stranger,' he quickly got used to that feeling and preferred it 'to feeling "homely".' As he reflected in a letter to E. M. Forster that he wrote on 20 September 1922 from Taos: 'After all, one is a stranger, nowhere so hopelessly as at home', (*Letters*, pp.550, 552). He had found a 'home' in the expansive deserts of New Mexico — something that he had failed to find in the cosiest drawing-rooms of England. He had not gone there as a pleasure seeker, and he never thought, that by having gone there and seen it, he had known all about it. During the rest of his short life it had to remain a powerful and unavoidable source of mystery for him. In what follows, I have attempted to show, through a reading of his letters and essays, what New Mexico meant to him.

Lawrence lived in New Mexico in three phases: from September, 1922 to February 1923; from April, 1924 to October, 1924; and, finally, from

April, 1925 to August, 1925. But throughout his life, whenever physical illness or psychological depression took him, he expressed an insistent wish to return there, as though it was only there that he could find a complete answer to all his sufferings and disillusionments. Even after his final withdrawal from New Mexico into England, he was to confess before John Middleton Murry his feeling about England in strong and cruel terms: 'England just depresses me, like a long funeral' (*Letters*, p.640). Whatever hope he had for an actual or ideal New World, had found its echo in New Mexico.

Although, at this time, Lawrence's travels over North America had created in him fresh doubts and new disillusionments about the nature of the American world, his descriptions of New Mexico are written in an enthusiastic prose — a prose which only reflects the nature of his response to this very differently American state. He thought that New Mexico, despite the fact of its being part of the United States, had been able to maintain its special identity. Its 'great free spaces'[3] offered him a kind of freedom that the streets of Chicago and New York had never offered him. Its very remoteness and distance from the more orthodox centres of civilisation, fulfilled the aim of the almost fabular journeys into new lands that he had been making before he came to New Mexico. For him, touching the New Mexican soil was like coming into an intimate contact with a magnificent and terrible source of spiritual power. It produced in him a state of fulfilment and brought significant changes in his life: 'I think New Mexico was the greatest experience from the outside world that I have ever had. It certainly changed me for ever. Curious as it may sound, it was New Mexico that liberated me from the present era of civilization, the great era of material and mechanical development', (*Phoenix*, p.126). This was something that even the holiest Buddhism of Ceylon or the exquisite beauty of Sicily had failed to bring to him. New Mexico had given him its 'shattering' touch, and he was never to be the same again:

> the moment I saw the brilliant, proud morning shine high up over the deserts of Santa Fé, something stood still in my soul, and I started to attend. There was a certain magnificence in the high-up day, a certain eagle-like royalty, so different from the equally pure, equally pristine and lovely morning of Australia, which is so soft, so utterly pure in its softness, and betrayed by green parrot flying. But in the lovely morning of Australia one went into a dream. In the magnificent fierce morning of New Mexico one sprang awake, a new part of the soul woke up suddenly, and the old world gave way to a new. (*Phoenix*, p.127.)

The eagle and the parrot became the true representatives of two civilizations vastly different from each other. The image of the eagle — a bird of prey — points to the destructive splendour of the new birth that Lawrence came to associate with New Mexico. It was a birth and a restoration that came at the end of a long and difficult process of suffering and struggle.

Lawrence was overwhelmed by New Mexico's '*greatness* of beauty', (*Phoenix*, p.127); by the 'soft and unwilling' (*Letters*, p.553) aspect of its lofty, indomitable deserts; by the 'fierce, proud silence' of its mountains. Its landscapes were not merely aesthetically satisfying — something that one could watch from a safe distance and appreciate; they were immensely

active, with a life of their own, forcing one to participate in their secrets. They had 'a splendid silent terror, and a vast far-and-wide magnificence which made [them] way beyond mere aesthetic appreciation' (*Phoenix*, p.127). After the 'depressing swirl of Europe' (*Letters*, p.598), the south-west of the United States had been able to soothe the Lawrences' badly-wounded spirit. On 18 May, 1924, Lawrence wrote to Catherine Carswell about the pristine glory of this un-American American state which had brought him the gift of a new life:

> The spring down in the valley is so lovely, the wild plum everywhere white like snow, the cotton-wood trees all tender plumy green, like happy ghosts, and the alfalfa fields a heavy dense green... [I] like having the big, unbroken spaces round me. There is something savage, unbreakable in the spirit of place out here. (*Letters*, p.602.)

Lawrence's repetitive, incantatory prose insistently points to the beauty and the terror of the New Mexican landscape. He found beauty in its 'proudness and mercilessness' (*Phoenix*, p.128); and this association of beauty and violence was the basis of his recognition of the realness of the Aztecs' mythic sacrifice of their hearts to the sun. The Aztec sun was not merely a source of heat and light: 'It is of a brilliant and unchallengeable purity and haughty serenity which would make one sacrifice the heart to it... [I]n New Mexico the heart is sacrificed to the sun and the human being is left stark, heartless, but undauntingly religious' (*Phoenix*, p.128). Lawrence had 'looked over all the world for something' that would strike *him* as 'religious'. And although he had found the 'simple piety' of the English, the 'semi-pagan mystery' of the Catholics of Southern Italy, and the 'semi-ecstasy' of Buddhists and Brahmins, in their own ways religious, none of these had involved him sufficiently; none had come to him as 'an uncontrollable sensual experience,' which true religion is; none had the inexplicable quality of an experience that occurs 'deep down in the senses.' He had 'no permanent feeling of religion' till he came to New Mexico and 'penetrated into the old human race experience there' (*Phoenix*, p.128).

Lawrence re-creates his experience of this living religion in the superbly rendered fable of *The Woman Who Rode Away*. As with him, it was the Woman's 'destiny to wander into the secret haunts of these timeless, mysterious, marvellous Indians of the mountains.'[4] Like Lawrence again, the Woman moves from the cold north to the warm and invigorating south. Soon after he completed the story, Lawrence expressed a fervent personal wish: 'I want to go south... The heart of the North is dead, and the fingers of cold are corpse fingers. There is no more hope northwards' (*Letters*, p.616). The Woman was only fulfilling, within the scope of fiction, what Lawrence was so desperately yearning after. In his Mexican stories, Lawrence fictionalized — and explored the essential nature of — his own private belief in a particular way of life. But at least in *The Woman Who Rode Away* he also asserted his now-established belief in the need of 'a return to the older vision of life': 'It needs some welling up of religious sources that have been shut down in us: a great *yielding*, rather than an act of will: a yielding to the darker, older unknown, and a reconciliation' (*Letters*, p.605). The all-significant 'yielding' to the primitive and

impersonal sources of power occurred within Lawrence; the fluent rhythm of his prose declares that ultimate liberation of the spirit which New Mexico had brought about.

The intense religious life that the Navajos kept up in their round huts gave him uneasy feelings about the 'essential Christianity on which [his] character was established' (*Phoenix*, p.126); it made him realize that their 'animistic religion is the only live one'. Five years later, in *The Man Who Died*, Lawrence's regenerate man was to bring something of the same animism into the orthodox version of Christ's story which (as Lawrence thought) it lacked in its original form. And two years later, in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Mellors's religion of the body was to be a repetition, in a slightly different, Europeanized form, of the natural religion of the New Mexican Indians.

It was a religion which recognized the continuous intercourse between the body and the spirit, between the individual and the cosmos; it was a religion which achieved what Lawrence described as 'a pure relationship between ourselves and the living universe about us' (*Phoenix*, p.176). Lawrence's rhythmic repetition of phrases of exaggeration ('Never shall I forget') are declarative of the unique nature of that religion in all its manifestations:

> But never shall I forget watching the dancers... Never shall I forget the utter absorption of the dance, so quiet, so steadily, timelessly rhythmic, and silent, with the ceaseless down-tread, always to the earth's centre, the very reverse of the upflow of Dionysiac or Christian ecstasy. Never shall I forget the deep singing of the men at the drum, swelling and sinking, the deepest sound I have heard in all my life... Never shall I forget... Never shall I forget... Never shall I forget... Never shall I forget the Indian races, when the young men, even the boys, run naked, smeared with white earth... (*Phoenix*, pp.130-131.)

For Lawrence, Christianity had lost 'the togetherness with the universe, the togetherness of the body, the sex, the emotions, the passions, with the earth and sun and stars' (*Phoenix*, p.357); it had encouraged the knowledge which derived from 'apartness, which is mental, rational, scientific'. New Mexico returned him to 'ancient forms', to a concept of communality which was 'religious and poetic' (*Phoenix*, p.357) and which expressed itself most completely in rites and rituals. The heavy, primitive rhythm of their drumbeats and dances, recreated, for Lawrence, an impression of a cosmic understanding and order.

To Lawrence, the New Mexican Indian seemed 'much older than Greeks, or Hindus or any Europeans or Egyptians'. But the Indian 'in his behaviour as an American citizen' did not concern him: 'What concerns me is what he is — or what he seems to me to be, in his ancient, ancient race-self and religious self' (*Phoenix*, p.129). He was not concerned with the Indian who sold baskets on Albuquerque station or 'slinks around Taos Plaza', but with the Indian 'as a civilized and truly religious man, civilized beyond taboo and totem', who shared in the oldest religious practices of his race. He found among such Indians 'a tribal integrity and a living tradition going far beyond the birth of Christ, beyond the pyramids, beyond Moses' (*Phoenix*, p.129).

Theirs was a religion which did not have gods, idols, images, or saviours.

For them 'everything was alive, not supernaturally but naturally alive' (*Phoenix*, p.132). It was a religion which 'preced[ed] the god-concept':

> There were only deeper and deeper streams of life, vibrations of life more and more vast. So rocks were alive, but a mountain had a deeper, vaster life than a rock, and it was much harder for a man to bring his spirit, or his energy, into contact with the life of a mountain... than it was to come into contact with the rock. And he had to put forth a great religious effort. For the whole life-effort of man was to get his life into direct contact with the elemental life of the cosmos, mountain-life, cloud-life, thunder-life, air-life, earth-life, sun-life. To come into immediate *felt* contact, and so derive energy, power, and a dark sort of joy. (*Phoenix*, p.132.)

The Indians' effort 'into sheer naked contact, *without an intermediary or mediator*,' Lawrence felt, was the 'root meaning of religion'. The New Mexican Indian, even after his 'rapid absorption into white civilization', had still retained 'some of the strange beauty and pathos of the religion that brought him forth'. When Lawrence planted corn at his Taos ranch with Trinidad the Indian boy, his 'soul paused to see his brown hands softly moving the earth over the maize in pure ritual. He was back in his old religious self, and the ages stood still' (*Phoenix*, p.132).

New Mexico *was* the greatest experience for Lawrence. Long after his final withdrawal from it, there were, in his letters and essays, repeated references to his stay there in affectionate and nostalgic terms. In March, 1928 he proposed to Aldous Huxley, 'Let's go to New Mexico'; on 24 January, 1930, barely five weeks before his death, he wrote to Dorothy Brett:

> I am lying in bed, quite ill, cut off from work and everything, trying to get my bronchitis healed a bit — very bad this winter. I want so much to get well enough to be able to start for New Mexico. I feel I'd get better there, and I get worse here. (*Letters*, p.849.)

In the midst of his terminal exhaustion (of which the many pauses in the letter to Dorothy Brett are an indication), he was longing for another renewal which this vital civilization would have offered him. A deeply religious man, Lawrence was prevented by 'so many little frets' of every-day life from coming at the 'real naked essence', that whenever he came to a new land, he found instant inspiration and which brought him in its wake a new faith in life as well as a renewed faith in art.

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NOTES

1. *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. Aldous Huxley (London: William Heinemann, 1932). (Page 275; all subsequent page references are to this edition.)
2. D. H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow*, (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1976), p.496.
3. D. H. Lawrence, *A Selection From Phoenix*, ed. A. A. H. Inglis (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1971). (Page 126; all subsequent page references are to this edition.)
4. D. H. Lawrence, *The Woman Who Rode Away and Other Stories*. (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1972), page 48.

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# MOSCOW IN TIME OF CHANGE

## by Judy Kendall

FOR some of my friends Moscow seemed a very strange destination for a holiday. And they tried earnestly to dissuade me: 'It isn't safe!', 'You might never come home!' or 'Will you have enough to eat?'. They were not the only ones to worry. Thanks to press sensationalism and fears of rabid bread queues, my British Airways flight was only a quarter full. And the British school exchange group that I met in Moscow was seriously depleted. The parents of eight out of twelve of the participating students cancelled their daughters' tickets at the last moment. For them it was clear that a wasted two hundred and fifty pounds was preferable to the unknown terrors of de-Sovietised Moscow. Not so for me, or evidently for the four girls whose parents were less fearful. It was a unique opportunity to experience a country in an exciting time of political and economic change. Moscow, with its harshly limiting Intourist tours (shepherded from Western hotel to museum to gallery and back) can easily become a sterile experience of culture behind the glass windows of the tourist coach, but in these times even the most unadventurous visitor could not fail to have a very stimulating experience.

While I was there I was lucky enough to get an invitation to the NIKA film awards — the Soviet equivalent of the Oscar. The whole evening was an exercise in glitz, glamour and designer wear. The evening opened with a screening of the old Soviet propaganda films — happy workers digging the soil and working the factories at twice the normal speed. The audience laughed and laughed, while a row of little girls dressed in the uniform of the party-following Pioneers stood stock still beneath the screen. Then young members of the Bolshoi ballet came on to perform a beautiful rendering of Tchaikovsky's flower dance. As they danced, two commanding figures strode into the front of the audience — a large man in khaki uniform with an instantly recognisable moustache, Stalin, and behind him a blue-suited bespectacled minder, his hated henchman, Beria — and the young Pioneers turned to salute him. After the initial shock the audience began to hoot and roar, but the man behind me whispered 'It's quite frightening,' and I was told how in the Soviet Union every one associates ballet with bad news — because that is all you see on the television when something terrible has happened — 'It was just ballet, ballet, ballet, during the coup'.

It was a grand opening to the show, which continued on that level. I learnt later that the organisers had spent half a million roubles on decoration, courtesy of the Ministry of Soviet Culture. It is money that will not be forthcoming in future years. Indeed, it is doubtful if the concept of Soviet cinema will survive at all. This is a phenomenon that will strike much of Moscow's rich cultural heritage, which ranges from the fabulous mysteries of the Fabergé eggs to the exquisite elegance and technical expertise of the Bolshoi ballet, and the wealth of Western as

well as Soviet art housed in the innumerable museums and galleries around Moscow. Under Soviet rule cultural organisations were heavily subsidised, in some cases for as much as 80% of their costs, entry fees were nominal and upkeep and maintenance merely routine matters. But now much of this money is expected to come out of the profit from exhibitions and performances, meaning an inevitable drop in standards, as artistic institutions are forced to tout for business along with other commercial enterprises. One result, a museum curator lamented to me, has already been an increase in exhibitions of nudes.

More traditional and lasting tourist sights, such as the Red Square and the multicoloured domes of St. Basil's, also show the signs of the times. St. Basil's domes are now crowned with the sparkling golden crosses of the Russian Orthodox Church, and the queue to see Lenin's body no longer covers the cobbles of Red Square as only a few faithful pilgrims wait for a last sight of a leader who must soon be removed from his position of posthumous glory. The flag that flies above the Kremlin now sports Russian instead of Soviet colours, and it will not be long before the glowing red stars that balance on the top of the Kremlin towers are replaced by the spreading wings of the Russian eagle.

Another 'new' tourist sight is the figureless pedestal outside the KGB headquarters. This was where Dzerzhinsky, head of the Soviet secret police (or KGB), once stood. Now the pedestal is empty and daubed with red paint to represent the blood of KGB victims. But the contradictions evident everywhere in Russia are present here too in the red wreaths placed beneath the pedestal by die-hard communists who lament the passing of the old regime. As for Dzerzhinsky himself, he now keeps company with other toppled statues of communism in the wasteland near Gorky Park.

Other changes are more mundane. When I made the brave entry into Moscow's glorious metro, simpler to use than the London Underground once the intricacies of the Cyrillic alphabet have been mastered, I was surprised at the number of colourful advertisements that are slowly creeping onto its walls and threatening to cover its smooth marble hallways — an impossibility only a few years ago. Some posters carry government health warnings or religious propaganda, but the more commercial ventures, such as insurance companies, are also gaining a hold. The advertisements reflect the present concern with shopping, which is a vital chore in food-hungry Moscow. Everyone carries a plastic 'perhaps' bag — just in case they see something they can buy. All those jokes about queueing that I heard before I went to Moscow cease to be funny — as one discovers how at least one member of the family, often an elderly relative, has to spend all their time in queues.

For food, most households rely heavily on their summer stores — vegetables pickled in salt and vinegar — which they eat into as the winter and shortages progress. It is not clear how many vitamins these retain and, more worryingly, as the teachers accompanying the British school exchange expressed, the mushrooms their hosts had carefully pickled from

the forest the summer before are 'well known harbourers of radioactivity'.

Foreign visitors, and those Russians with hard currency, are members of a privileged and isolated community who have access to the special hard currency shops for foreigners which are springing up everywhere — the only places to buy delicacies like cheese, sausage, wine. One university academic that I met and entertained to dinner with supplies from the limited but luxurious stores of the 'credit card only' Finnish supermarket said that the last time he had drunk wine was on his birthday, 'not last year, but two years ago'. He had not tasted cheese for six months. The Finnish shop only accepts credit cards in an effort to stem the queues of Russians that have infiltrated other foreign currency shops — who would give a Russian a credit card? They are paid, it is rumoured, in dollars from their firms' hard currency allocations in an effort to persuade them to work instead of queue.

Even the Arbat — a touristy shopping area filled with entrepreneural stall holders selling Russian Matrioshka dolls, scarves, colourfully painted wooden spoons, intricately carved wooden cobras and numerous talented and not so talented street artists — bears the influence of de-Sovietisation. Some of the dolls represent past Soviet presidents encased in a large burly Yeltsin, or the 'Plodders', failed leaders of the coup. Everything is sold in roubles, making prices ridiculously cheap for the foreigner, but everywhere stallholders are only too happy, if nervous of police control, to accept hard currency.

But despite the grim stories and evident hardship, the Russian people, still manage to retain their traditions of warm hospitality. Once I was able to break past that stony-faced exterior of officialdom, for which it helped to have a few words of Russian, the friendliness and welcome that I experienced have remained the most memorable images of my stay in Moscow.

# MANTEGNA: COURT PAINTER OF MANTUA

## by David Peet

LUDOVICO Gonzaga, second Marquis of Mantua, had ruled his city-state since the death of his father Gianfrancesco in 1445. His younger brother Carlo had been their father's favourite, and indeed the old Marquis had petitioned the Emperor to name Carlo his heir. Once in possession, Ludovico determined to make Mantua a city of the first rank and influence in Italy, entering useful alliances and offering his undoubted skills in war and the raising of armies to any who required and would pay for his services.

The embellishment of his city was of prime concern. Inspired by the example of Pope Nicholas V, who started a long process of improving Rome's physical appearance and its artistic reputation, Ludovico employed Luca Fancelli as his architect and had two churches designed for him by Alberti. He also secured the services of Brunelleschi in draining the land around the Po, an essential step in improving agriculture in the area and nurturing local industries such as silk- and wool-weaving. Through his care for its land and people, Mantua prospered.

In 1457 Ludovico invited the Paduan painter Andraea Mantegna to his court at Mantua. Then in his mid-twenties, Mantegna had a considerable reputation in Padua, near which he had been born in about 1431, the son of a carpenter. At the age of ten he had been appenticed to and adopted by Francesco Squarcione, and had learnt much of Graeco-Roman art through the copying of pictures and making casts of statues. He would also have been exposed to the genius of Donatello, who had worked in Padua for some years and erected in the city the magnificent equestrian statue of the condottiere known as 'Gattemelata'. Mantegna's altarpiece in Santa Sophia is lost, as are most of his frescoes in the Ovietari Chapel in the Church of the Eremitani, although the two sections of the *Life of S James* which survived allied bombs show convincingly Roman scenes, powerful and dramatic with daring use of perspective. They also demonstrate his lifelong tendency to Romanize Christianity, and establish his austere and sculptural style, sharp-edged and obsessively detailed and almost completely lacking in tenderness. A splendid exhibition (sponsored by Olivetti) of Mantegna's work is currently at the Royal Academy of Arts.

Mantegna had been approached by the Marquis Ludovico by letter in 1456, and the offer received formally in 1457 through Ludovico's agent Fancelli was tempting — a good salary, a comfortable home, adequate provision for his growing family and arrangements made for his removal to Mantua. Nevertheless, Mantegna was reluctant to leave his settled existence. His friends were all in Padua, and the city had much to offer through its thriving artistic life and the reputation for learning of its ancient university. Besides, there were works already commissioned to finish, such as the altarpiece for the Church of S Zeno. Ludovico was

insistent, however, and urged Mantegna in 1459 to come and inspect the new Chapel, which was by then nearly complete, and eventually Mantegna arrived in the city in April 1460.

The first major commission in his new post was the decoration of the family's country palace at Goito. At this time he painted for the Ducal Palace a *Death of the Virgin.* The figures are set in a hall in front of a window, through which can be seen the bridge of San Giorgio spanning the lakes which surround Mantua on three sides. The picture was obviously destined for one of the rooms in the Palace from whose windows exactly the same view could be seen. The panel has at some time been cut down, but fortunately the upper part has survived, although in a much less satisfactory state, and hung under the title *Christ with the Virgin's Soul.* It was only in this century that Longhi realised that the two were part of the same work, and the lines of the vaulting in the hall can clearly be seen to correspond. The lower part was acquired by King Charles I, but it was sold off by Cromwell after the King's execution.

Apart from the depictions of the family in the Camera degli Sposi, we have from the painter's hand a portrait of Francesco Gonzaga, the Marquis's second son, probably painted in 1462 just as the boy was leaving for Rome to be made, at the age of eighteen (!), a Cardinal.

From the early 1470's the exhibition includes the light and cheerful *S George,* depicting the saint in armour against a landscape with a road winding uphill to a small town. The pose exhibits that stiffness which Vasari and many others subsequently criticised. The detail of the armour is archaeologically exact, and the reflected light from it helps to soften the somewhat sharp-edged effect of the whole. That S George has apparently slaughtered his domestic-looking dragon on his own threshold is suggested by the beast's muzzle and the Saint's right hand, clutching a broken spear, projecting forward out of the architectural frame. Many pictures in the exhibition show equally intriguing applications of the rules of perspective, of which Mantegna was so forward-looking a master.

Ludovico died of the plague in 1478, at the family seat at Goito. He had not found Mantegna easy to deal with, for the painter was of forthright and quarrelsome disposition and wrote some remarkably sharp letters of complaint when his salary fell into arrears. Ludovico himself was often pressed for money, relying as he did on getting paid by those who employed him as a soldier for their campaigns, but he accepted the artist's complaints with good-natured grace and tried to meet his demands. When Mantegna felt that his status required better living conditions, Ludovico made available money for the refurbishment of his house and set aside for him a summer residence.

The reign of the third Marquis Federico il Gobbo — the Hunchback — was to be short, and much of it was spent in trying to maintain Mantua's position vis-a-vis her powerful neighbours and allies. His immediate family used his frequent absences on campaign to attempt to wrest control of the city from him, although the plot hatched by his brothers Gianfrancesco and Rodolpho to poison him and his son Frederico was foiled by his

youngest brother Ludovico. Throughout his reign Federico, although by no means as artistically inclined as his father, supported Mantegna as his family had done, and continued to adorn the city and the Ducal Palace with new purchases of art and antiquities.

From this period comes the *Dead Christ*, a powerful and horrifyingly realistic study in perspective, which Mantegna no doubt intended for his memorial Chapel and refused to part with during his lifetime. His sons had to sell it after his death to pay off his debts.

On the death of Federico in 1484 Mantegna feared that there would be difficulties in maintaining his position at court, and applied for patronage to Lorenzo de' Medici, Il Magnifico, whom he met when the latter was on a visit to Mantua. His fears proved groundless, however, as the new Marquis Francesco made it clear that he would continue to employ Mantegna as his father and grandfather had done.

It was in or about 1485 that Mantegna started work on the *Triumphs of Caesar*, although there has been some unresolved dispute whether the actual commission came from Francesco or had been suggested earlier and not until this time been acted upon. The nine canvasses (ten had apparently been planned) were the culmination of Mantegna's dream of re-creating the grandeur of ancient Rome. The epic series of paintings purges all suggestions of the contemporaneous world, setting before the beholder a grand and heroic procession culminating in the victorious emperor seated in his chariot against the backdrop of a splendid triumphal arch. Purchased by King Charles I, these were the only items in the Royal collection not sold off by Cromwell, and have remained since 1660 at Hampton Court Palace. Their subsequent history is unfortunate — so badly had they deteriorated that by 1700 they had to be restored, which in those days meant practically repainted, by Laguerre. Later restorations did more harm than good, until at last between 1962 and 1975 the job was done properly. Little of the actual surface as left by Mantegna now exists, Canvas VII being so overpainted that it has not been included here, but copies and prints suggest that the repaintings follow the originals faithfully enough.

Mantegna's work on the *Triumphs* was interrupted by a summons in 1488 to Rome by Pope Innocent VIII to decorate the Villa Belvedere in the Vatican. The painter was given leave by his Lord, who possibly hoped that Mantegna might assist in the securing of a red hat for his brother Sigismondo, but if so, he was to be disappointed, as Pope and painter did not get on well. Payment for the latter's services was no more regular in Rome than in Mantua, and the story goes that Mantegna painted eight roundels in the Villa's chapel, seven depicting Virtues and the eighth an old woman. When the Pope asked who she was, Mantegna is said to have replied 'Ingratitude'.

Mantegna evidently found much inspiration in Rome, although there is no record in his subsequent work of him reproducing any of the actual buildings he encountered there. On his return after two years he settled down to the completion of the *Triumphs* and an increasing number of

commissions. A striking grisaille of *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* dates from this period. It is a remarkable picture (and in very good condition) of grey highlights and brown shadows, the only colours being applied to the background which gives the sky the appearance of marble. The tent is reduced to a flat drape, before which Judith stands in a detached, serene pose. The entire effect as presented to the onlooker is of sculpture rather than painting, and one may have sympathy with Berenson's view that Mantegna painted people 'as if they had never been anything but marble, never other than statuesque in pose'.

In 1490 Marquis Francesco married Isabella, daughter of Duke Ercole d'Este of Ferrara. The pair had been betrothed when he was a teenager and she a small girl, a splendid match considering that the d'Este family was much richer and longer established than the Gonzagas. Isabella was striking rather than beautiful, if the portrait by Costa, the court painter who succeeded Mantegna, is to be believed. Mantegna himself painted her, but she disliked the result, and commissioned a sketch from Leonardo when he passed through the city in 1500. He was by then too busy with other affairs to turn it into the painting which she requested.

She had determined early on that she should have her own 'Studiolo', a private apartment hung with works of art of her own choosing. She approached Leonardo, who was too busy, and Giovanni Bellini, who felt cramped by her too detailed requirements. Mantegna planned three, but completed only two, substantial allegorical paintings. *Parnassus* (in the Louvre, not exhibited) shows Venus and Mars entertained by the Muses singing and dancing while Apollo plays the lyre, the whole in serene and elegant classical balance. *The Triumph of Virtue,* which depicts Minerva driving a number of grotesque figures symbolising various vices out of the patroness's garden, is perhaps less satisfactory as a composition, and the number of complicated allusions which had to be included to satisfy the didactic scheme designed by Isabella's advisers may have cramped Mantegna's style. The third canvas, the *Legend of the God Comus,* was unfinished at the artist's death.

The chalk and wash drawing of Francesco, probably dating from the mid-1490s, is a more doubtful attribution, though no doubt the Marquis sat at some time for his Court Painter. The details of the face are more finished than those of the costume, and it is a pity that this was never transferred to canvas.

In his last years, Mantegna continued to accept commissions which he had increasing difficulty in completing. Isabella complained that work for the family was much in arrears, and on these grounds refused to allow the artist to undertake work for others. He was permitted by Francesco to fulfil a commission for the Cornaro family of Venice, the *Introduction of the Cult of Cybele to Rome,* completed in 1506. This is conceived as a frieze, the figures viewed *di sotto in sù* against a coloured marble backdrop, and should be imagined as high up on a wall in a well-lighted room for its full effect to register.

Mantegna also continued to buy properties and artefacts for which he

had difficulty in paying. When pressed for the last instalment on a house purchase, Mantegna appealed for help to Isabella, offering her his treasured antique bust of Faustina. Isabella drove a hard bargain, and, although he got his way, he bitterly regretted parting with this most loved possession. He died within a few weeks, in September 1506 — Isabella thought of a broken heart.

He was buried in a memorial chapel in the Church of San'Andrea, which he had been allotted by the Canons in 1504. Little of his intended decoration was carried out, but the altarpiece, the *Families of Christ and S John the Baptist,* has survived, as has the bust which he undoubtedly modelled and cast himself, probably in the 1480s. Stolen by the French in 1797 and restored to its place in 1816, this self-portrait — tight-lipped, cold-eyed and bad-tempered — brings before us the quarrelsome genius of Renaissance Mantua.

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*The exhibition 'Andrea Mantegna' (which is sponsored by Olivetti) will close on April 5.*

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[David Peet is writing a history of the Netherlands.]

# OTTO DIX — AIMING AT THE JUGULAR

## by Muriel Julius

FOR fifteen years after World War II no one here or on the Continent paid attention to the work of the powerful German realist painter, Otto Dix. It was when it appeared like a shockwave in the Royal Academy's 1985 exhibition, 'German Art in the Twentieth Century' that first I became aware of it. Alongside the excessively erotic works of Christian Schad one experienced there the full flavour of the 'Neue Sachlichkeit'.

Now, one hundred years after his birth, we are considered mature enough to take Otto Dix at full blast. One hundred and thirty of his works, courtesy of Becks Beer and *The Independent,* are being shown at the Tate Gallery, Millbank, London until the 17th May.

They come opportunely, during a phase of political unease in Germany, and they display more clearly than any words the enormous differences between the German and the Anglo-Saxon psyche. Dix demolishes any idea that art is the language of the romantic emotions. His work creates tension and unease to a remarkable degree. It is imbued with a bitterness and cynicism almost entirely absent from the work of British artists. Compared with the delicate, linear, watercolour world of the English artist, David Jones (1895-1979) — almost his exact contemporary — one could imagine they lived not only in different countries but on different planets. Dix affirms Roger Fry's opinion: '... the message of a work of art is generally immensely complex, summarizing a wholeness of experience hidden in the artist's subconsciousness'.

Dix's life spanned eight of the most turbulent decades in Germany's history: from the Empire of Kaiser Wilhelm II, through the Great War, the Weimar Republic, Hitler's Third Reich, the Second World War to the post-war division into East and West Germany. Born in Gera in Thuringia in 1891 to working-class parents, he first trained as a painter and decorator. In 1909 he moved to Dresden, dubbed 'the German Florence' by the poet Herder, and enrolled in the School of Arts and Crafts.

Like much of the intellectual youth of Europe at the time, he immersed himself in the philosophical works of Friedrich Nietzsche, embracing enthusiastically the Nietzschean belief that life should be actively experienced in all its most intense forms, the more daring and dangerous the better. Thus Dix volunteered for war service in 1914. Relating his reasons for doing so he wrote: 'I had to go to war. I had to experience someone beside me suddenly falling over, dead, hit squarely by a bullet: I had to experience all of it quite exactly. I wanted to. After all, I'm not a pacifist, am I? Perhaps I'm an inquisitive person. I had to see everything for myself. That's the kind of Realist I am ... I have to experience for myself all the unfathomable depths of life; that's why I went to war and that's why I volunteered'.

Dix served as a front-line machine gunner on the Western Front and in Russia. Daily acquaintance with bombs, blood, gas, corpses, dirt, bullets and mortar fire never threatened his stability. Circumstances made it impossible to paint, but he made drawings incessantly. He relished war until the end. This set him apart from many of the artists he met after 1918: Max Beckmann had a nervous breakdown after serving in a field hospital. George Grosz, a communist, who volunteered for political reasons, was invalided out after six months.

The paintings Dix worked on from his sketches of his fellow soldiers, the trenches, scenes of horror and destruction had great impact after the war. 'Reports from Hell' is a series of remarkable self-portraits by turns wry, mocking and grim done in heavy black chalks that intensify the image. Some are in this exhibition, often horrifyingly expressive or surreal.

After the revolution of November 1918 a major change occurred in Dix's work. Back in Dresden in 1919 he painted a series of 'cosmic' nudes, including two ethereal works 'Lunar Woman' (No. 24) and 'Pregnant Woman' (No. 25) possibly derived from Nietzsche's affirmation of the child as a new beginning, a sacred affirmation.

There followed a short foray into the anarchism of Dada, but by 1920, possibly through contact with such cynical Berlin artists as George Grosz and Raoul Hausmann, Dix turned to a heightened form of realism, one that inferred that the real driving force of humanity is animalistic rather than heroic. Some of his most powerful and pathetic images were scenes in brothels. To my considerable surprise the press invitation to this exhibition displayed one of them — not a pretty sight. 'Recollection of the Hall of Mirrors in Brussels, 1920' shows a particularly brutish middle-aged private soldier grasping one of the sagging breasts of the unlovely prostitute who sits reluctantly upon his knee. The image is the more obscene because portions of them can be glimpsed in the angled mirrors that surround them.

In 1920 Dix made four terrible paintings of the hideous infirmities of disabled war veterans. The heightened realism of his exquisite technique makes them almost unbearable. In 'Skat Players' (No. 29) we see the remains of three limbless men playing cards. One is earless, another has no jaw; one holds his cards in his toes, another in his mouth.

Even more disturbing is 'Prague Street' (No. 28). A stunted child regards a shop window containing nothing but artificial arms, legs and feet. In the foreground a prosperous profiteer drops a coin into the surviving hand of a pathetic beggar whose legs terminate in wooden stumps. A bowler-hatted legless Prussian projects his trunk on a wheeled board while his dog holds a newspaper with the headline 'Juden Raus' showing that he has learned nothing. We glimpse the surgical boot of a woman fleeing the scene. This was Dix presenting the truth, unvarnished, in concert with a new artistic mood, later to be called 'Neue Sachlichkeit' (New Objectivity).

In the early 1920s Dix had a flat at the fashionable west end of Berlin, ideal for his nocturnal visits to bars, clubs and brothels. In his auto-

biography, Klaus Mann describes the atmosphere of those frenetic Weimar years: 'Millions of undernourished, corrupt, desperately lascivious, angry and pleasure-craving men and women staggered and whirled in the jazz-delirium. Dance became a mania, a cult. The Stock Exchange faltered, government ministers tottered, the Reichstag passed nonsense legislation. Disabled ex-soldiers and war profiteers, film stars and prostitutes, pensioned monarchs and pensioned schoolteachers — all of them shook their limbs in a gruesome euphoria. One danced the Foxtrot, the Shimmy, the Tango. One danced hunger and hysteria, fear and lust, panic and horror. Anita Berber — her face set into a violent mask under the weird curls of her purple coiffeur — danced the "Coitus".'

Dix, a superb dancer himself, sleek and elegant, once thought of earning his living as a professional dancer. Instead he painted a searing portrait of the dancer in 1925. Anita Berber wears a skintight dress, red like her hair, against a red background — the colour of eros and of death — an early death in her case, hastened by cocaine and alcohol. Hers was but one of the many portraits Otto Dix painted that captured the inimitable flavour of the Weimar years to an extraordinary degree.

Many of Dix's sitters, even the young women, were very ugly, a fact he did nothing to diminish. Certainly the Slav/Semetic features of his friend and mentor, Alfred Flechtheim, were ugly to the point of caricature. He was one of the most successful art dealers in Germany when Dix painted him in 1926. He specialised in modern French paintings. He is seen standing in his gallery, one hand resting on an oil painting by Braque, the other on an erotic drawing by Picasso. Dix afterwards regretted the cupidity of his expression. He wears an elegant suit of tweed, itself a technical tour de force. Dix records that the underpainting was in tempera followed by successive layers of transparent glazes, each more colourful than the last. It took him three weeks to do it.

The portrait of the poet and painter, Adolf Uzarsli is no kinder. Bathed in an unnatural blue/grey eerie light, his crewcut hair, oversized spectacles and creased face set on distorted shoulders that render his neck invisible, are not handsome. He is dwarfed by an elaborate, pseudo-baroque architectural background (No. 49).

The most famous and evocative portrait of the period is of the journalist, Sylvia von Harden. She sits, awkwardly, at a table with legs crossed, showing the top of her stocking. There is a drink and a box of red-tipped cigarettes, one of which is clutched in her long red tipped fingers. She wears a red checked dress. Her tired hooded eyes, in which she affects a monocle, the prominent teeth suggest talent and wit, as well as a decadent, sexually ambivalent bohemienne. In reality she was a mediocre journalist who earned what money she could by thrashing out cheap, romantic fiction. Nor was she markedly bohemian; she lived in a stable relationship with a left-wing journalist, the father of her child.

Dix met her in the Romanisches Café where she spent hours drinking. It was the favourite meeting place in Berlin after the war for poets and painters. Dix went there almost daily. Harden knew that what claim

to fame she had depended on her portrait by Dix. She always kept in contact with him, even when she fled to London, where she lived in reduced circumstances until her death in 1962.

Dix was the first Twentieth Century artist to re-introduce the tryptich. In this form he created both modern and religious allegories, compositions that depicted his continued religious belief in the ineluctable cycle of life, in sex and death. Increasingly he used the exquisite techniques of the German Old Masters.

For some time Dix had been living in Dresden with his wife and child and had taken up a teaching post. With the coming of the Nazis he was dismissed — even imprisoned for a short while — accused of plotting against Hitler. His works were included in the well-attended exhibition of 'Degenerate Art'. He moved with his family to the country near Lake Constance and painted unsubversive landscapes that sold well. He also worked on allegorical subjects that hinted at the dark forces threatening his world. Called up in 1945 in the last desperate months of the war, he was captured and put into a French prisoner of war camp. He painted Germany in ruins. Until his death in 1969 he tried to recapture the *elan* of his youthful work; but Dix is forever associated with the febrile world of the 1920s. Those are the works one returns to again and again.

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*Accompanying this exhibition is a comprehensive catalogue with five essays by distinguished art historians. Until the 10th May the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh is showing the City of Dresden's unique collection of drawings, watercolours and prints chosen and given by the artist to that City.*

# THE IMPACT OF MUSIC ON FILM

## by Laurence Green

MUSIC can enhance a movie and it can detract from its power. It can help build atmosphere and tension and it can undermine both character and action. It can be something to savour or something to forget. How often have you left a cinema saying 'well the film didn't amount to much but the score was memorable'? What is indisputable is that music plays an integral role in a film and for far too long its importance has been undervalued.

A great director like the late Sir David Lean used music as a trademark — his best films, *Lawrence of Arabia, Brief Encounter, Great Expectations* and *Dr. Zhivago,* were remembered as much for their score as for their script, performances and camerawork. Music in each case helped set the theme, mood and tone of the film, creating both an emotional impact and a sense of time and place.

All too often at major international film festivals the role of music in films has been overlooked. How many prizes, for instance, at Cannes or Venice have been awarded to the best film score? Hardly any I can remember. Admittedly at the glitzy annual Hollywood Oscar ceremony the value of the musical contribution to a film is recognised — but only in scant fashion, usually with a scattering of minor prizes that rarely bring recognition to the film or its composer.

However, this situation has now been redressed with the 18th Flanders International Film Festival, held recently in the charming Belgium city of Ghent, where a major part of this annual event focused on the Impact of Music on Film. The festival marked the seventh consecutive year that Ghent has organised a competition based on this theme. The competition was reserved for non-musical fiction films, as opposed to films dealing with music or owing their existence to music, which were brought together in other festival sections.

Why feature films you may ask? The reason is obvious: you cannot possibly compare a biographical film on Franz Schubert to a concert film of the Talking Heads or a documentary on the Guarneri String Quartet to a fiction film in which music serves the dramatic structure of the story. Music is the reason why musical films exist and that is why they could not compete. Furthermore, production of musical films is, both from the point of view of quality and of quantity, so unequal that it is very difficult to set up a proper competition. In feature films music has a specific function: it serves the narrative, it can give the film a special dimension, influencing the viewer's reception, his state of mind and his involvement. The music is a meaningful component in the concept of the film as a whole. Whether a film works with existing music or new compositions, whether this is classical music, jazz, folklore, rock, ethical or electronic music, or whether the music was composed for the film is not essential. Which music a director had chosen and why, and how he worked

with it was what mattered.

For a good example of how an effective music score can enhance a film and give it extra edge you need look no further than Sean Penn's directorial film debut *The Indian Runner*. This could be described as a modern day Caine and Abel story set in a small American town circa 1968. In point of fact, the film is a precisely measured portrait of two brothers, one 'good' and the other 'bad' (although the first is lethargic and the latter full of passion, and nothing is quite so clear cut anyway). As the 'bad' brother returns from the Vietnam War and begins to fight against the limits of respectable society — including the values and emotional ties of his family — the 'good' brother is faced with choosing ultimately between trying to save his brother or maintaining his own identity and keeping safe those dear to him. Being an actor, Penn's main thrust in his direction of the film is in getting true and moving performances from his fine cast — David Morse and Viggo Mortensen are particularly good as the brothers in question — but he pays equal attention to staging, pacing and structure, while the distinctive music score by Jack Nitzsche perfectly complements the drama without drowning it out. One which scores in all departments.

The colour and flamboyance of gypsy music gives Rajko Grlic's *Charuga* a strong atmospheric feel. This is a bold testament to the current chaos affecting the beleaguered lands of the Southern Slavs. Jovo Stanisavljevic Charuga returns from the Russian revolution to hunger and prison in his native Slavonia — the Slavonia that today finds itself in the grip of a bitter civil war. He escapes, joins a communist band of outlaws, assumes an enigmatic leadership and wreaks murder and havoc on all those who come across his path. The music here virtually symbolizes a sense of national identity and pride which had been lost under the yoke of an oppressive regime. Ivo Gregurevic gives a full blooded performance as the Yugoslavian Robin Hood of the title. In all then this is a serious political fable of our times disguised as an action movie which, although crude and violent at times, also manages to be funny and thought-provoking.

As the 'Impact of Music on Film' was the central theme of the festival, several special events were organised, the highlight of which was a concert by Michael Nyman, whose driving, incessant rhythms have so distinguished the works of Peter Greenaway, none more so than his latest, *Prospero's Books*. This intelligent, innovative and visually breathtaking film faithfully follows the plot, characters and text of the original, where Prospero, Duke of Milan, after twelve years of forced exile on a remote and magic island, plans a revenge and then a reconciliation with his enemies. With an advanced computer graphics technique, superimposed images and striking colour, the film avoids becoming too clever for its own good and, aided by a strong script, an impressive music score that propels the film along, and a memorable performance by that doyen of the British theatre, Sir John Gielgud, this emerges as a work of brilliant originality that lingers in the mind for a long time afterwards.

The winning film was Lars Von Trier's evocative and haunting *Europa*. Set in Germany just after World War II, the film centres on Leopold Kessler (well played by Jean-Marc Barr), a young American who returns to his native Germany as a gesture of goodwill and takes a job as a sleeping-car conductor. Von Trier creates a nightmare world of guilt and suspicion as Kessler is drawn into the wealthy family that owns the railway system, in his love for Katharina, the boss's daughter. Despite its Nazi connections and involvement with the Werewolves, a group of terrorists bent on preventing German collaboration with the Allies, the family is needed by the American authorities to make the nation function. Reminiscent of the German Expressionist cinema of the 30s, with black and white photography, surreal injections of colour, disconcerting use of front projection, an hypnotic, chilling narration by Max Von Sydow and a suitably dramatic score by Joakim Holbek, this is one of the most original and striking works to emerge from the European cinema of the 1990s.

Truly a festival worth singing the praises of.

# Literary Supplement

## IS TURKEY EUROPEAN?

*Turkey in Europe and Europe in Turkey.* Turgut Ozal. Rustem, Nicosia. £14.95 from Gillard, Radstock, Avon.

On January 21, 1992, it was reported that Martin Bangemann the European Commissioner on a visit to Turkey had said that Istanbul was on the threshold of European Community membership. This was further confirmed in a dramatic way by going on: 'My view is that a European Community without Turkey is inconceivable'. What did he mean by this? Did he mean full membership of the Community or simply some form of extended association, which Turkey has had in any case in some way off and on since 1961?

There remain some very big questions, of course, about membership. The whole question of new members and the criteria for membership has to be examined. Lord Jenkins, who, as Roy Jenkins, was President of the Commission from 1977 to 1980 said that there were three unofficial criteria for joining the Community: the country applying should be European, it should be democratic and it should want to join, and be able to convince the other members of its real wish to join. This was at least partly the reason why Britain's first two applications failed.

These criteria are partly formalised by Article 237 of the Treaty of Rome which states that any European country may apply to join. So, the question remains, is Turkey European? Lord Jenkins, giving evidence to the Select Committee on European legislation in the House of Lords last week (February 1992) referred to a piece of paper which the Turks were given by Brussels in 1961 stating that they were European and which of course they now wave in the noses of those in Brussels when they apply for membership. (Their formal application in April 1987 received a qualified 'No' in late 1989.) Lord Jenkins made the acerbic comment that if you needed a piece of paper to state your nationality it must be in question anyway, which somehow doesn't seem quite fair when Turkey has been a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, while being a very long way from the North Atlantic.

Turgut Ozal's book is written to tackle all these points and to draw on the very long history of the piece of land which is now called Turkey, but which we should perhaps call Anatolia, and which others unwisely christened Asia Minor. Where does Europe end in the Eastern borders anyway? This is particularly important to the newly emerging or re-emerging states of the former Soviet Union.

The problems he tackles at length (and he should know, having been both Prime Minister and President) are also those of culture (there is nothing in the Treaty of Rome about being Christian, and there are large Muslim minorities in the Community anyway) and not only agriculture. Turkey is of course largely an agricultural society: wouldn't this put an impossible strain on the EC resources and the Common Agricultural Policy? There is also the vital question of democracy. Turkey does not yet have a full democracy; but isn't the definition of democracy one of interpretation anyway? Probably the greatest problem is that of the Greeks, who coined both the words Europe and Democracy and now threaten to use a veto over Turkish entry. Of course Ozal argues his case well and persuasively and there are big moral questions

to be answered when the Turks say: 'You want us as soldiers but not as merchants. We are allowed to guard the granary but we are not allowed in'.

This book is an important document and source material for all the questions which have to be asked by applicant states, whether they be tiny Malta or advancing Hungary.

MICHAEL L. NASH

## ANGLO IRISH RELATIONS SIXTY YEARS ON

*The Unresolved Question: The Anglo-Irish Settlement and its Undoing, 1912-1972.* Nicholas Mansergh. Yale 1991. £18.95.

Revolutionary wars leave untidy political, legal, and constitutional ends which take years to bring into harmony. In a long and fruitful life as an eminent historian of modern Ireland Nicholas Mansergh was much concerned to record and chart the many and difficult negotiations of Anglo-Irish relations during this century. This book is now rapidly becoming known as the classic sequel to his other great work, *The Irish Question: 1840-1921* (1965); in both books Mansergh had to face all the perils of writing contemporary history for he was not only an observer of the Irish revolution but knew many of the policy makers and political leaders on both sides, friendships and acquaintanceships which are never allowed to mar the admirable objectivity of *The Unresolved Question*. His death in January 1991 sadly occurred before its publication.

The Anglo-Irish settlement is traced in full and clear detail from its inception before the outbreak of the Great War until its demise, after a long and painful 'illness', in 1972. Mansergh's mastery of the tortuous ways of diplomatic and constitutional history is self-evident even to the casual reader. He never allows the legal niceties, many of them Delphic in obscurity, to cloud the telling of the chronological and progressive thrust of what is after all a subtle, and at times, problematical political settlement. The very word 'settlement' may suggest a fixity and permanence which it did not have; the title and sub-title themselves indicate the lack of finality. The reader is however left with a clear idea that here at last someone has understood, and has satisfactorily explained why there has been no easy solution to Britain's government of Ireland in the past or of Ireland's British question in the present. A major reason for this clarity is quite simply that Mansergh brings out fearlessly the purposes which the Anglo-Irish settlement aimed to serve in the dark days following the Rising and the Civil War and which eventually led to the partition of Ireland. In recording those aims, the chronology of negotiations is not allowed to simplify the problems and in dealing with the notabilities and their idiosyncracies the author keeps objective, sees the many-sidedness of the difficulties and presents the most abstruse concepts in an elegantly written text.

All the efforts to reach solutions by constitutional means are here — Home Rule, the Government of Ireland Act of 1920, the attempts at a Dominion settlement and the Anglo-Irish Treaty. Six of his sixteen chapters deal with the testing out of the settlement and its undoing following partition. The undoing is seen to begin with the dismantling of the Dominion status of Ireland (1932-38), the removal of the External Association (1937-49), the latter a constitutional concept now much in discussion with relation to Europe and sovereignty. But the declaration of a Republic of Ireland is not the final scene in the Act of the undoing of the settlement because he goes on to trace with immaculate precision the process whereby from 1949 Stormont was eroded, undermined and eventually abolished on 18 July 1973.

In assessing the degree of success and failure of all these various experiments in government Mansergh is, as one would expect, liberal and balanced in historical judgements, but not all would agree with him that the ending of Stormont was also the virtual end of the special Unionist position in British and Irish politics. In the erosion that ended the Northern government he shows how the obvious advantages of the Unionist position were dissipated in about twenty years. The nemesis of Unionism he sees in the consequences of Edward Heath's one day visit to the North following on Bloody Sunday, namely, direct rule from Westminster under a Secretary of State.

*The Unresolved Question* ends with a wonderfully succinct set of reflections, one ruefully hints that the Act of Union of 1801, whether we call it 'an ascendancy charade' or the result of a tidal wave of 'colonial nationalism', was, nonetheless an idealized concept of an independent Irish legislature, a symbol of what once was and might be again. Symbolism, however, can be a snare for the historian investing past events, as it can do, with a significance they did not originally possess. Once again among legal historians, Mansergh poses the question: What happened to the Home Rule Act of 1914, suspended as it was until after the war? Finally he sees the Republic's secession from the British Commonwealth of Nations in 1949, and the demise of Stormont in 1973, as the significant events marking the rites of passage into history of both parts of the Anglo-Irish settlement.

JOHN MCGURK

## DICTIONARIES FOR DABBLERS

*A Dictionary of Conservative and Libertarian Thought.* Edited by Nigel Ashford and Stephen Davis. Routledge. £40. *A New Dictionary of Political Analysis.* Geoffrey Roberts and Alistair Edwards. Edward Arnold. £9.95.

For those who dabble in politics and enjoy spending the odd half hour thumbing through quotations and reference books as I do, then two new publications should add to the variety of what you may already have on your shelves.

The *New Dictionary of Political Analysis* is really no more than a dictionary of terms in common usage in political parlance. The editors have selected words which differ in their application in a political science context from their everyday meaning. This has no pretensions to be a dictionary of political thought but may be particularly useful to the student of government or politics, but words like 'behaviouralism' and 'structuralism' and several of the economic terms defined in this dictionary are less familiar than the overwhelming majority of insertions. It seems odd that 'one party system' requires a quarter of a page of explanation although it would perhaps be ungenerous to deny 'Marxism' its two pages. On the other hand 'methodological individualism' for which there is a cross reference ('see reductionist theories') comes into the same category as 'longitudinal studies' and is helpful to those of us who are more concerned with the practical than the theoretical application of politics.

On the other hand 'log rolling' and 'pork barrel' give a distinctly trans-atlantic touch to concepts that have grown largely in the European context. While most of this dictionary contains that which is familiar and even banal, there are complexities and subtleties in vocabulary that are valuable even for those who have been immersed in politics for most of their lives. The other added attraction is that it allows us to pat ourselves on the back for being so familiar with so much of its contents. It adds little to the dictionaries of political thought and theories that already exist but will add a little fun to those boring hours between arriving home exhausted from the working day and switching

on Newsnight, whether for stimulation or as a cure for insomnia. That will depend on one's personal preferences as indeed will one's attitude to the new dictionary that contains a great deal that is not new at all.

By contrast, *A Dictionary of Conservative and Libertarian Thought* with its suggestions for further reading and its bibliography, is less concerned with terms than with political theory and in particular the two established schools of Conservatism and classical Liberalism, the latter being taken to describe the Libertarianism which pertains to that wing of modern American Conservatism. While greater emphasis is given to the United States and the UK its contents are also drawn in a large degree from French and German thought. The problem is immediately encountered in that, while one person might term Libertarian in the sense that John Stewart Mill would have understood it, another may use that term for the extreme non-interventionist economic philosophy which in theory at least was the hallmark of Thatcherism. Although described as a dictionary and serving as a reference book, the reader will find many delightful nuggets such as Adam Smith's concept of the 'Invisible hand' or the fact that 27 per cent of America's Nobel Prize winners have been Jewish Americans while blacks provide over half of all America's professional basketball players. The former are selected by the classically Nordic committee — the latter by predominantly white management. This does no more than emphasise cultural differences that can often erroneously be used to create racial stereotypes.

Whereas the *New Dictionary* will serve the aspiring student, the *Dictionary of Conservative and Libertarian Thought* requires a more sophisticated digestive system and should enhance the appetite of those more used to Cordon Bleu political thought. Perhaps one of the fascinating features of political vocabulary is in the manner in which it can be used according to one's predilections. Thus, the term 'totalitarian', normally applied to both communist and fascist dictatorships alike, was altered by Mrs. Kirkpatrick who became US Ambassador to the United Nations to distinguish between totaliarian and authoritarian governments.

Words themselves often become mutations of their original meanings. In current western society the word 'socialism' may mean anything from the Trotskyite version of Bolshevism to the mild social democracy of most Western and Antipodean Socialist or Labour parties. On reflection, one will need more than the odd half hour of boredom if one is to absorb what is in fact a valuable addition to any political library.

Not least among the virtues of the *Dictionary of Conservative and Libertarian Thought* is that it is in itself thought-provoking and instructive whilst leading the reader to explore in far more depth the various concepts brought within its covers. While it may embrace far less terminology than the *New Dictionary of Political Analysis,* it is clearly aimed at a more refined palate and might better be reserved for periods of longer digestion on rainy afternoons rather than a quick dabble between dinner and Jeremy Paxman. Above all, it fills in some of the more recent thinking of the New Right which has predominated the 1980s, in the wake of the overwhelming intellectual predominance of Left Wing theory in the post war years. While there may be little doubt that the pendulum will swing back or possibly in a new direction entirely, this is a particularly useful compilation whatever one's personal views.

PAUL ROSE

## IRONING OUT AUDEN'S WRINKLES

*The Table Talk of W. H. Auden.* Alan Ansen. Faber and Faber. 1991. 142pp. £6.99.

Sadly, one has to read this book to review it; but at least this painful task saves others time and money. This slim volume, as Nicholas Jenkins admits in the Foreword, is not 'a verbatim record of what Auden said'; rather, it is the residue of the American poet Alan Ansen's nightly transcripts, taken down between 1946 and 1948, of 'what he remembered Auden saying'. Faber continues to milk the Auden legacy for all it is worth: your feelings about this will depend on your response to Joseph Brodsky's judgement that Auden had 'the most acute mind of the twentieth century', or Richard Howard's introductory declaration that 'here are instances where he is, supremely, Auden'. The man himself opined to Ansen thus: 'it's a mistake to write long reviews of books that aren't any good'. Sorry, Wystan.

This book is slight, both in extent and stature. The actual table talk, overgenerously annotated, fills only 98 pages. Furthermore, Auden was no Johnson or Hazlitt; he could not turn a finished apophthegm that would stand by itself. The only two epigrams here that stick — in my mind, at least — are quoted from Wilde, a real master of the form. Wystan's own remarks are flip, off hand, teasing — not witty. They do not gell, as single sentences or in aggregate. Comments like 'it's impossible to represent Christ in art', or '*Twelfth Night* is really a very nasty play', invite, at most, a shrug.

The triteness evinced above permeates all Auden's writing, whether in plain view or heavily disguised. Was it Stephen Spender who recollected how the young W.H. jotted down loose phrases as they came to him, to be lumped together into his early poems, being too lazy to actually compose? As Orwell said on looking back at Housman's verse, Auden's lines *tinkle*. He courted adulation at every turn, by glamour, verbal prestidigitation. The quickness of the tongue deceives the mind that something deep and mysterious is going on; and that illusionism is critical. Auden was not content simply to please; he flattered his audience by pretending to inform. Instead of questioning the received ideas of his public, or encapsulating them, he parroted them. The knowing wink to the stalls — the habitual manner of his Muse — became the uncontrollable nervous tic which passes for irony in his work. It is no accident that his most successful performance, *The Sea and the Mirror*, is a gloss on someone else's play. He never could approach the first of Eliot's Three Voices of Poetry: that of the poet talking to himself alone.

There are some interesting passages in Ansen's farrago, but these are technical — 'English produces spondees without effort'. The best reason to read Auden has always been to improve your ear rather than your mind. If this bespeaks a hollow centre to the crumpled sage . . . well, so there is. Like Citizen Kane, this 'muddled heart' had so many opinions, but never really cared about anything; and it is when he is being sententious that he rings most false. 'The conscious acceptance of guilt in the necessary murder': all well and good to theatrically recant such lines, or the refrain 'today the struggle' — the worst kind of tinny slogan — that dins through 'Spain'; but how to renounce the sensibility which coined them? Wystan had the gifts and dilettante posture of a Nineties rhymer: it was his bad luck to finish as Laureate to the generation of Donald McLean and Kingsley Martin. He was so much a man of the Thirties that, like Sartre, he diminishes as his age recedes from us.

PAUL ST. JOHN MACKINTOSH

## BY SOME OTHER SEA

*Song of Love: The Letters of Rupert Brooke and Noel Olivier.* Ed. Pippa Harris. Bloomsbury. 1991. 302pp. £17.99.

In the race for romance, frustration nearly always beats fulfilment. Where would the Capulets and Forsytes have been without those forbidding social mores? Rupert Brooke and Noel Olivier operated in the changing world of Ann Veronica and their Bloomsbury friends, but they were still hedged by conventions no longer part of modern experience.

Rupert was a golden boy; a brilliant classics scholar; an Apostle, already marked out as a poet he seemed to have all doors open. And then, in 1908 he saw Noel, a fifteen year old Bedales schoolgirl. She came up to Cambridge to visit her sister, already a student there, and to hear her father give a lecture. Noel was the youngest of four independent and attractive daughters of Sidney Olivier, first Labour peer. Of magnificent presence, he was a natural actor like his nephew Laurence, and played the part of Colonial Governor perfectly.

Opportunities to meet were not great — the odd walk, a few days in a party for Switzerland, a family summer camp. Rupert could only lay siege by letter until at another camp at Bucklers Hard in 1910 he declared his love and they became secretly engaged. Neither had good advice. Rupert's domineering mother disliked all the Oliviers and Noel's eldest sister already showed signs of that instability which would sadly land her in a mental home for life. Faced with much opposition, the frail glory of those early letters faded. Noel had hoped the engagement would stabilise the situation. Rupert saw it as a base for further assault. His letters, still blazing adoration, wit and sonnets, became frantic and increasingly egocentric. He came near to nervous collapse and with masculine hypocrisy blamed both the girl he induced to sleep with him, and the girl, Noel, who refused. He finally fled to Hawaii and the South Seas. Whether his was the normal urgency of a young man in love, or whether like others of that doomed generation he knew 'we have so few years', it is that hindsight which makes the passion of these letters such compulsive reading. Perhaps the strangest aspect of this correspondence is the maturity and clear-sightedness of Noel, whose head was never turned by her difficult and demanding lover. She often appears the older in her steadfast friendship and understanding; in a gradual but inevitably painful withdrawal.

Rupert and Noel continued to correspond until he was called up and, after a nasty episode in Belgium in 1914, he left for Gallipoli and death in 1915. 'Next year', he wrote 'in Acheron' (the underworld). Noel, now a medical student, replied — 'I have been trying to enlist and may die as soon as you'. But she did not. Noel completed her medical training and became a distinguished paediatrician. She married a fellow doctor, had five children and a satisfactory liaison with Lytton Strachey's brother James.

Noel's grief at Rupert's death might have indicated a coming together again. As moderns they might have gone casually to bed. But they were creatures of their time entangled in their social mores and to this we owe the vivid love songs of Rupert and the wise integrity of Noel's response.

MOLLY MORTIMER

## STONE OF HEART

*The Taking of the Stone of Destiny.* Ian Hamilton, Q.C. Lochar. £10.99.

From the greying eminence of Hill 67, Mr. Ian Hamilton, Q.C. looks back forty-two years to the lawless heyday of his twenty-fifth year. The day that he, a law student at Glasgow University, became a thief.

In reality, though, he was never that. For at no time was it his intention permanently to deprive, and his was not so much an act of theft as of repossession. We are speaking, of course, of the 'lifting' of the Stone of Destiny — Anglice: The Stone of Scone. Gaelic: *Lia Fail* — stolen by Edward I from Scone Abbey, in Perthshire, where, on the nearby Moot Hill, the kings of Scotland had for centuries been inaugurated upon that ancient and sacred stone.

Since the shameful English larceny, the Scottish Stone of Destiny had remained, illicitly implanted into the Sassenachian Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey for 654 years, until... on Christmas Eve 1950, Ian Hamilton and three compatriots — Gavin Vernon, Alan Stewart and Kay Mathieson — came hell-bent to retrieve it. This is the moving and extremely well told story of that raid: a wonderful log-book of youth and its unselfish, naïve aspiration, of Blue Bonnets over the Border, of Quixote bonnets over windmills.

Outraged by England's non-honouring of her 600-year-long promise to return the Stone, these brave four swooped down, like derring-do characters out of R.L.S., to redeem the betrayal. Six hundred and twenty-two years gone by. No more time to wait and waste on polite negotiation with Westminster. Better far to ruffle the ermine. An empty chair would speak louder than a full House.

So... the adventure. A St. Pancras hotel 'giving not a halfpenny more than a pound's service for twenty shillings'.... A conspirators' refuelling at — pure nostalgia — Lyons' Corner House in the Strand. Then, the Abbey lying in a pale East Coast sunlight... inside to hide and wait, watching, like Bruce, spiders in the gathering dusk... Night closing in and closing time... At last, bearing their precious four hundred-weight burden of history, the noblest prospect that these Scots could ever see — *pace* Dr. Johnson — the high road that led them from London to Scotland.

Mr. Hamilton, today 'one of Scotland's top criminal Q.C.'s', has no regrets. He was doubtless guilty of trespass to goods and criminal damage. But, he avers, youth is not wasted on the young. Old age, not youth, is all trivia — 'A pension and a portfolio of shares'. Now, at sixty-seven, he has perhaps reached that plateau whereon the sameness of life on each succeeding thin-worn day is a matter of comfort rather than regret, and the night-borne promise of the breaking of a sequentially identical dawn is no dread, but something most devoutly to be wished. He is fortunate. He has a still strongly flickering fire of patriotism to dream and warm his hands by.

RICHARD WHITTINGTON-EGAN

## MANAGING MEN

*Getting It Together. Memoirs of a Troubleshooter.* John Harvey-Jones. Heinemann. £17.50.

Is the child the father of the man? Not in John Harvey-Jones's case. The confident extrovert on television, the solver of other companies' problems, was a shy, lonely and physically timid boy, bullied remorselessly at his prep school, useless at games and (still, he says) hopeless at things practical. He is especially frank about his childhood, and his (happier) days at a clearly very competent Dartmouth. In essence, he grew up without benefit of normal home life. By contrast, the grown man owed much to the experience of living in all-too-close camraderie on board HM destroyers, cruisers and in particular HM submarines. 'Life on a submarine,' he says, 'was a great leveller and an even greater destroyer of pomposity and personal pride'. Moreover, as a naval officer he had a remarkably varied life in many varied locations, including Intelligence duties in Hamburg and Kiel in West Germany.

It was the qualities bred in Harvey-Jones by service in the navy that he brought with him when in 1957 he left for ICI. He writes vividly of his daughter's polio that drove him to make the change, and of his experiences in the company, which, in the bewildering and speedy changes of job and location it demanded of him, and which, in its diversity and federal character, had much that recalled the Senior Service. Sir John's goal, in both his careers, was for flatter hierarchies' and 'to walk the floor'. What he condemns in himself — and behind his assured front he is a constant self-analyst — are those periods when he allowed personal ambition to reign, and he played the part of tycoon. This is a remorselessly candid autobiography, genial, wise, and very readable.

ESMOND WRIGHT

## SHORTER REVIEWS

**The Blackwell Encyclopedia of the American Revolution,** edited by Jack Greene and J. R. Pole, (£50), is a vast compendium: The War of Independence, its causes and aftermath, the American economy, the war-time government, the Constitution, even notions of 'equality', 'liberty' and 'property' *et al,* are all summarised and explained in 75 short essays by British and American experts. To each essay a brief bibliography is appended, and there is a valuable final section of mini-biographies. Social and economic issues are given an attention unusual in most textbooks, and there are also some ten useful outline maps. Generations of American students (and even those British undergraduates lucky enough to study the topic) are likely to raid this substantial volume for many decades to come: and they will find the most recent interpretations usefully summarised here.

**Galicia in the Context of the European Regions.** (Manuel Fraga — Iribarne, Xunta de Galicia.) This is a forcefully argued pamphlet issued by a former Ambassador to Britain and a leading member of the Spanish Populist Party. The author is the leading figure in the political life of Galicia, the ancient extreme north-west region of Spain that in its Celtic links, fishing, obsolete steel and shipping industries, resembles Scotland. It has its own local dialect. Fraga's pamphlet is a declaration of regionalism as the essential feature of the new, post-Maastricht, European Community He stresses that there are already four Inter-Community organizations that co-ordinate the interests and demands of the regions to be found in every EC member country. There are eight in Spain altogether and Galicia is one of them. He enthusiastically quotes Jean Monnet, the founder of the EC, who insists that 'the sovereign nations of the past' can no longer deal with the problems of the present. In his conclusions Fraga wants to see more direct participation between the regions, Galicia, of course, in the first place, and the EC administration in Brussels in planning and development. He sees an 'Autonomous Spain' and an active Galicia in the newly structured Europe. The pamphlet thus gives significant support to the hardly concealed drive of the Brussels administration to expand its present, sophisticated direct control which can now be seen as the emerging main political feature of next year's Single European Market. It is an unmistakable signal.

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## THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1992: ANOTHER VICTORY FOR THE BLUE MUFFINS

**by Richard Mullen**

AT ten in the evening of 9 April, most people in Britain settled down in front of television to watch the election returns. The results afforded one great satisfaction to almost every viewer: the pollsters and the pundits were shown to be totally wrong in their predictions. There was as great a race between the two television empires as there had been between rival political candidates. Yet television rivalry is kinder than the political variety: both the BBC and ITN (Independent Television News) could claim victory. More people watched the BBC coverage, but ITN's was quicker with its exit poll.

The returns were slow to come in because a beautiful spring day had produced a turnout of almost 78 per cent. Both the BBC and ITN exit polls predicted a 'hung Parliament'. Their computers confirmed the opinion polls of the last week. But the two television companies' exit polls also indicated one surprising forecast: the Conservatives would have the most MPs even though they would still lack an overall majority.

The pundits began to speculate about possible coalitions: what would the Ulster Unionists demand to support the Tories. Would the Liberal Democrats insist on their scheme of proportional representation as the price for supporting Labour? Suddenly in the midst of all this waffle, reality came down to earth: Mrs. Thatcher was landing at Heathrow, back from an American lecture tour. Reporters scurried to the Concorde lounge. 'Mrs. Thatcher, Mrs. Thatcher, what will happen in a hung Parliament situation (sic)?' As so often, she told them exactly what they did not want to hear. Quoting Mark Twain, she warned: 'Never prophesy about the future'.

Once again, as so often in her political life, she was right. Within an hour or two all the expensive television gimmickry began to show a steady increase in Tory victories. The first real sign came with the first few results. We have heard much in these last few years of 'Essex Man'. This is a term of contempt among the intellectual elite of London. 'Essex Man' symbolises all those former Labour voters who rallied to Mrs. Thatcher in the 1980s. They were the people who for the first time earned enough money to enjoy life. 'Essex Man' and 'Essex Woman' did horrible things: they preferred to improve their kitchens rather than spend their money on the latest turgid novel from Mr. Salman Rushdie. They even refused

to agonise over his latest lecture to the British nation. Many a metropolitan dinner party resounded with eloquent denunciations of the 'greed and materialism' of these vulgar upstarts.

One of the first returns on election night came from Essex itself: Basildon, a fortress of 'Essex Man'. The pundits and pollsters had announced that the 'C2s' — their current jargon for skilled workers or 'Essex Men' — would return to their ancestral allegiance to Labour. Basildon, like many other newly prosperous towns in the Southeast, has suffered greatly from the recession and from high unemployment in the last few years. In a desperate effort to save the Basildon seat, Tory Central Office had been forced — with obvious displeasure — to call upon Mrs. Thatcher to campaign there. The pollsters and the pundits assured us that even she could not save the seat. Yet the count showed the Tories had held the seat by a majority of 1,480.

By the time most people stumbled bleary-eyed to their beds in the small hours of Friday morning, the Tories had won an absolute majority. By midday on Friday, the final results were clear:

| | *Seats* | *gains* | *losses* | *Popular vote* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *MAJOR PARTIES* | | | | |
| Conservatives: ... | 336 | 10 | 44 | 42.8 *per cent* |
| Labour ... ... | 271 | 44 | 5 | 35.2 *per cent* |
| Liberal Democrats ... | 20 | 4 | 6 | 18.3 *per cent* |
| *MINOR PARTIES* | | | | |
| Scottish Nationalist | 3 | 0 | 1 | |
| Welsh Nationalist ... | 4 | 1 | 0 | |
| Unionists (N. Ireland) | 13 | 0 | 0 | |
| SDLP (Irish Nationalists) | 4 | 1 | 0 | |

*Total votes for the three main parties were*:

| | |
|---|---|
| Conservatives ... .. .. | 14,231,884 |
| Labour ... ... . . | 11,619,306 |
| Liberal Democrats: . . ... | 6,083,661 |

With an overall majority of 21 seats, John Major had led his party to an astounding victory. For the first time since the days of Lord Liverpool in the early nineteenth century, one party had won four elections in a row. His achievement is all the more impressive when one considers the circumstances surrounding the election. Mrs. Thatcher had led the party to victory in 1979 over a vastly unpopular Labour government. The 'winter of discontent' had showed the over-wheening power of the trade unions. A wave of strikes had led to hospital porters deciding whether an operation could truly be considered an emergency. Mrs. Thatcher's victory in 1983 benefited from her resolute leadership in the Falklands War and the next contest in 1987 came in the midst of a great economic boom. On three occasions she had enjoyed what Napoleon defined as an essential attribute of genius: luck. In November 1990 Mrs. Thatcher fell, much as Napoleon had in 1814, betrayed by those whom she had led to great victories. Tory MPs, like Napoleon's Marshalls, desired an end to conquests.

The pollsters and the pundits pointed out that never before in British history (British history for most of these people consists of a few decades)

had a government come from behind in opinion polls to win an election. Furthermore the recession had ravaged the areas of their greatest strength: the middle classes, particularly the southeast of England. Virtually everyone agreed that Labour was infinitely better in its presentation. The Liberal Democrats, under the energetic, not to say frenetic, campaign of Paddy Ashdown, seemed to be gathering wide support from disillusioned Tories.

However, John Major had one great ally: Neil Kinnock. Mr. Kinnock deserves to go down as one of the best opposition leaders in British history. Taking over the Labour Party after its catastrophic defeat in 1983, he had resolutely rebuilt it into a well organised force. He had begun his own political career as a far-left radical. His earliest recorded opinion came at age ten when he announced that the Queen's Coronation had made him 'sick'. In his early years in the Commons he protected his digestion by refusing to attend the Speech from the Throne and by returning any royal invitation with the comment 'Previously engaged'. The 'boy orator' nearly burst with alliteration and enthusiasm for unilateralism and wholesale nationalisation. After 1983, he began the skilful process of tossing overboard all his radical cargo. By 1987, 'designer socialism' had replaced crusading rhetoric. By 1992, the only 'red' thing about Labour was the fresh red rose that decorated every Labour politician's well tailored suit. The 1992 Labour Manifesto was an impressive production in which the word 'Socialism' made but one brief appearance.

In spite of Mr. Kinnock's achievements in refashioning the opposition, there was considerable distrust of him among large parts of the electorate. People wondered how a man could abandon all his early principles and now fervently preach the exact opposite. He also suffered from constant attacks by the tabloid press, which took every opportunity to hold him up to ridicule and laugh at his ability to use six words where one would have done. He disproves the *Reader's Digest* slogan that it 'pays to increase your word power'. For many people he became the incarnation of the 'Welsh Windbag'.

In the last week of the campaign, the hitherto superb Labour organisation made a great mistake, one that may well be seen as the deciding factor of the election. A 'glitzy' rally was staged in Sheffield where Mr. Kinnock and his front bench colleagues received the adulation of supporters to the accompaniment of laser beams, cascades of sparkling bits of foil, pop music and pop opera. An exotic medley of 'celebrities' — sports stars and authors of slim incomprehensible novels — abandoned the comforts of London to go among ordinary folk and offer homage to the rising sun. For the assembled faithful it was no doubt glorious. Yet, far more people watching clips and 'sound bites' on television found that the 'Sheffield Coronation' — as it became known — made them as 'sick' as the boy Kinnock had been made by the real one in 1953.

On the eve of the 'Sheffield Coronation' John Major changed his campaign. When polls reported a leap in Labour support pointing to an outright Labour majority, Tory leaders panicked on 'Red Wednesday'.

Prices on the Stock Market fell dramatically. Few noticed that 'Red Wednesday' coincided with April Fools Day! The Prime Minister reached for an antique to retain his office. When the blue 'battle bus' pulled into any town, out came a wooden soap box which the Prime Minister mounted and began to speak. No one could ever claim that he could match Mr. Kinnock's perfervid oratory. But somehow the image of 'Honest John Major' abandoning all the modern techniques of 'spin doctors' for such a simple device caught the approval of many undecided voters.

In the last few days Mr. Major began to speak much more forcefully, sounding almost Thatcherite in his uncompromising rejection of Scottish devolution or in his scorn for the bureaucrats of Brussels. Although the pollsters still prognosticated that it was virtually impossible for him to win a majority, the last polls pointed to some small surge in support. The pollsters should have abandoned their computers to seek the advice of Mr. Sam Ward, a Manchester baker. For three weeks he had been baking muffins in the colours of the three main parties. By the third week of the campaign muffin buyers were showing a decided preference for blue muffins. The muffin sales proved an exact forecast of the election.

In the end Labour was defeated by two issues: taxation and worries about Mr. Kinnock's competence. Labour's 'shadow budget' promised higher taxes for middle-income families. Many of those whose income was low enough to escape the new taxes accepted the Conservative argument that they would stifle economic recovery. The 'champagne socialists' who graced Labour's £500 a plate dinner saw this as yet another example of 'greed and materialism'. An anecdote that emerged after the election symbolises this. A group of rich Labour celebrities gathered for a victory party. Among those present were Melvin Bragg, a television producer and novelist, Harold Pinter, a playwright, and his wife Lady Antonia Fraser, a biographer. The star guest was no less than Salman Rushdie. They became increasingly glum as the prospect of Labour victory vanished. Amidst the gloom they heard a strange noise from a room upstairs. Every Tory victory was being greeted with stamping and cheering by the policemen assigned to guard Rushdie. No doubt the policemen are good examples of 'Essex Man'.

Labour now faces an uncertain future. They have to find a leader to replace Mr. Kinnock. In the last six elections they have never managed to achieve 40 per cent of the popular vote. They must decide whether to attempt a deal with the Liberal Democrats. Yet to achieve that, they must accept proportional representation, an issue which divides the party.

Only one thing is certain in politics and that is its perpetual uncertainty. Who would have dreamed as Tories celebrated the 1987 election that within three years many of the victors would be reaching for their stilettos to stab the victor? Perhaps there is another certainty: in the next election all the parties would be wise to pay less attention to the polls and more attention to Sam Ward's muffins.

# SLOVENIA FACES THE FUTURE

## by Gorazd Bohte

'NOTHING will ever be the same as it used to be.' These were the words of Milan Kucan, president of Slovenia, after the Republic proclaimed its independence on June 25, 1991. The president himself was probably at the moment not fully aware of how true his words would turn out. The event marked an end to the first stage of the painful process of Yugoslav disintegration. For many years after Tito died the impression was that something was in the air but the trouble was that nobody really knew what was going to happen and perhaps even more importantly when and how it was going to happen.

The 1981 Kosovo riots were the first notable sign that the federation was not as tight as it looked at first sight, but it was the spectacular rise of Slobodan Milosevic to political power in Serbia (1987) and the implementation of his politics that made even the blind man see what the name of the game was. Milosevic combined communism and Serbian nationalism to achieve almost absolute political power in Serbia. In the so-called 'yoghurt revolution' he abolished Kosovo's and Vojvodina's autonomy. Both his goals and his methods were unacceptable to other Yugoslav nations. This was hardly surprising as his final ambition was to create some sort of a Greater Serbia which would comprise all of Yugoslavia but Slovenia and a small part of Croatia.

The Slovene communist leaders at the time would settle for any kind of loose confederation but they were pressed not only by Milosevic who left little doubt of who would be in charge in the new, third Yugoslavia; they had to confront also a completely changed situation in Slovenia. The mass resistance of Slovenes against the demonstration of power by the Yugoslav army in the trial of the Four (Jansa, Zavrl, Borstner and Tasic) in 1988 and the Committee which was formed for the protection of their rights in many aspects raised the level of mass political consciousness.

These events quickly ended debates of how far political democratization was allowed to go. The approach of the communists at the time was that everything can be allowed but political parties (apart from theirs of course). The intensity with which Slovenes backed the Four and the antagonism they expressed towards the federal army later proved to be one of the turning points in the developments that took place. The opposition gained in confidence while the communist authorities lost some of it. It did not take long for new political parties to register. The majority of the newly formed political parties united under the coalition of Demos (Democratic opposition of Slovenia). The coalition won the absolute majority of votes in the free elections held in spring 1990. According to prior agreement — that the party which wins the majority of votes inside Demos would name the premier — the president of the Christian Democrats Lojze Peterle became the head of the new Slovene government. The

fact that the former communist party leader Kucan was at the same time elected for the presidency of the Republic showed that the Slovenes wanted step-by-step changes as well as a respectable level of his personal popularity. Many people believe that his role in the process of transformation of Slovenia from one party dictatorship to a parliamentary democracy was significant and a positive one.

What was important at the moment was that both Demos and the opposition tended to favour independence from Yugoslavia. This programme achieved its credible affirmation in the outcome of the plebiscite in which 88.3% of the citizens voted for an independent and sovereign Slovenia. In the meantime Yugoslavia was becoming more and more Serbian and therefore loosing its identity. With its last breath the federal army in an open act of war tried to halt the tide of events. In the short June-July war Slovenia also showed herself to be a country capable of surviving militarily. The war later flared to extremes in neighbouring Croatia and revealed its most gruesome and inhumane face. The international community realised that a certain historic period was finally coming to an end and a new one beginning in the Balkans.

At the same time a very dynamic internal political life was going on. The Slovene assembly passed on the 23rd of December 1991 a new constitution which defined the basic characteristics of an independent and sovereign state of Slovenia and its internal order. The main concentration is now on individual important pieces of legislation which would in the future decide to a great extent social relations in Slovenia. Perhaps the most crucial is the package of laws on the privatization of public property and other questions in connection with the ownership law.

Internal political confrontations came to full power too. The point of demarcation was no longer identical to the line of separation between Demos and the opposition. This could be seen in the internal conflicts and even in the break-up of individual parties. As a consequence a new picture of right, middle and left was drawn on the Slovene political map.

The proceedings in the Hague peace conference, especially the opinion of the Badinter's EC arbitrary Commission that in Yugoslavia's case break-up of the federal state took place rather than seccession of Slovenia and Croatia which was Milosevic's point of view, but above all the pragmatic realization that things had changed for good, led to the diplomatic recognition of Slovenia by all European states and all other important countries with the notable exception of the United States. But recent hints indicate that we will not have to wait much longer for the formal US recognition. Yet diplomatic recognition by itself did not change very much the living standard of an average Slovene worker or peasant. It simply represented an entry ticket to the grown-up world. From now on how well we will perform will depend on ourselves without the troublesome tutorship of Belgrade. And there is enough reason to be concerned about that. The economic situation deteriorated markedly in the last year. GDP fell by a tenth, unemployment increased significantly, while average salaries diminished to the level of a few hundred of deutsche marks. This was also

expressed in the wave of strikes when teachers, doctors and workers in some companies tried to improve their material status or tried to force the government to implement collective contracts and thus ensure basic social and material security.

Nevertheless, there is hope that enough potential is hidden in the Slovenes which would help a young democracy stand on its own feet and would encourage creative forces in the economic sphere to pull the country out of the recession. Foreign capital investments could be of great help in the revival of the Slovene economy. It can justifiably be expected that after diplomatic recognition of Slovenia on the part of the USA (which will be of decisive influence for the entry of this young state into the International Monetary Fund and World Bank), Slovenia's political risks will be considerably reduced.

The decisive factors of foreign capital investments will primarily be economic and financial ones, and in this sphere Slovenia has many advantages over the other ex-communist countries. Although Slovenia started to lose some advantages compared with Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Federation, and even Poland (the case of the former East Germany being different and therefore incomparable), they are still huge.

By advantages we mean primarily an inexpensive, but relatively well-educated workforce, adjusted to European working practices, with a good command of foreign languages and sound management training. However, in order to exploit these comparative advantages, Slovenia will have to adopt proper ownership and tax legislation as soon as possible. As a result of uncertainties in this field, and especially because of the political events of the last few months, only poor results have been obtained in the inflow of foreign capital. A certain amount of fear on the part of the Slovene establishment towards foreign capital has been of decisive importance — as if rich foreigners could not wait to invest their money in Slovenia — while in fact money is being fuelled into the areas with a low level of risk and high probability of profit.

While (we hope) the first problem belongs to the past, a great deal of effort will be needed to solve the second. The above-mentioned comparative advantages of Slovenia are merely a good starting point.

Most foreign investments have so far come from Germany, followed by Austria and Italy. Foreigners have shown greatest interest in trade, financial services and consulting, and to a much lesser extent in industry. In the past, for every foreign investment exceeding DM 100,000, special studies outlining the influence of an investment on the entire infrastructure and economy in Slovenia needed to be carried out. This restriction has been abolished, with the exception of large infrastructural projects.

An analysis made by the Institute of Social Planning of the Republic of Slovenia has indicated that companies which have expressed greatest interest in foreign capital are in the fields of power, food-processing, metal and textile industries, iron metallurgy and automobile parts.

The majority of the companies surveyed believed that possibilities for faster economic growth and development which will ensue from the

penetration into the European market outweigh the risks related to the competition in this market. However, it needs to be stressed that this opinion was shared primarily by those companies which are already strongly represented in this market. Approximately 40% of the companies were of the opinion that the European Community markets were more demanding and less accessible than others. In spite of this, 90% of the companies included in the survey expected that after penetrating the market they would improve their sales opportunities and also their own competitiveness. Production quality, innovations, better delivery terms and considerable reduction of costs are those elements which Slovene companies will need in their future battles for foreign markets.

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The June number of *Contemporary Review* includes: *Scotland after the Election* by R. D. Kernohan and *Subsidiarity in State and Church* by Roger Greenacre.

# THE THIRD WORLD: LIVING WITH DEBT?

## by Mark Cook

WITH the Gulf war, the break-up of the Soviet Union, the democratisation of Eastern Europe, the Single European Market and this year's elections in the US and the UK, one area of concern has taken a back seat, that is Third World debt. Ignoring the problem, however, will not make it go away; external debt problems are here to stay imposing restructuring costs, lower standards of living and development problems for many Less Developed Countries (LDCs).

Why this more low key approach to the debt crisis and can there be any painless way of resolving LDCs' debt problems? To answer these and other questions requires us to examine, briefly, how the debt crisis arose and the methods by which the developed countries, the international banking system and the IMF have attempted to come to terms with the problems.

History points to the oil price hikes of 1973/74 and 1979 as a major step in the growing indebtedness of LDCs. The industrialised West and the non-oil LDCs ran up huge balance of payments deficits as their economies could not adapt quick enough. At first the international banks were eager lenders to the Less Developed Countries (LDCs), since the LDCs appeared to be reasonable credit risks. The prices of their export commodities were high, they had high growth rates and so could reasonably be expected to pay back the loans at some future date. Furthermore, the international banks believed that the existence of 'lender of the last resort' arrangements with their central banks meant that this facility would be on offer to them if the LDCs were unable to pay off their debts, thus some commercial banks took on riskier portfolios in return for higher returns.

By 1976 debts by the LDCs totalled $228 billion with bank debts at $49 billion. For the LDCs creditworthiness had become a problem. Commercial banks may well have wished to reduce their lending, but for US banks, a loan which serviced for 90 days must be declared as 'non-performing' and may no longer be 'booked' as an asset. So it was imperative for them to keep earlier loans 'alive'. Some LDCs which were oil producers received larger export earnings but also sought even more ambitious growth programmes, financed by foreign bank debt. In the US after the 1979 oil price rise, the tightening of money supply growth and a loose fiscal stance served to raise interest rates both in nominal and real terms. Since the majority of LDC debt was denominated in dollars the impact on these countries of high interest rates was enormous. In addition, the recession in industrialised countries and the adverse terms of trade effects all boded ill for the LDCs. External debts became unmanageable and by August 1982, Mexico unilaterally announced that it could no longer meet the interest and capital repayments on its $80 billion overseas bank debt. Within months, dozens of other LDCs followed suit.

The problem with the debt crisis was a two-fold one; commercial bank

exposure to debt and the difficulties in servicing debt repayments. Solutions concentrated on these two areas with a bias towards the former in the early 1980s. Initial policies, therefore, were aimed at keeping the pressure on debtor nations so that the debt could be serviced whilst at the same time looking for ways to relieve the pressure on the banks. Five major proposals have been tried and tested:

1. Debt rescheduling: this is renegotiation of the terms of the loan, that is postponing and extending the repayment of principal and interest.
2. Debt/Equity Swaps: developing countries debts are exchanged for equity in commercial projects in the debtor country. The existence of these debt/equity swaps has stimulated growth of a 'secondary' market where creditor commercial banks may sell their developing country debt. The buyers in this market can then trade this debt for an equity position in the debtor country. The LDC can benefit from the debt/equity swap if they are able to 'capture this discount' in the secondary market. The size of the secondary market is small, however, and it would take many years of such action to reduce substantially LDC debt. A further problem is that if the direct re-purchase of the debt by the debtor nation occurs by exchanging this for local currency, there is the likelihood that this will lead to an increase in the money supply, thereby inducing inflation. If the debtor nation tries to reduce the money supply by selling bonds then in essence, the debtor country is ridding itself of external debt and replacing it with domestic debt.
3. Debt cancellation: some of LDC debt is cancelled, thus increasing the ability to service the remainder of their debts. The credit-worthy middle income countries who were planning to borrow more funds in the future disavowed themselves from such a proposal since they felt that they would then be considered as very risky investments and therefore face higher interest charges. Before long, therefore, it was fairly obvious that the request for debt relief was confined to official loans to low income countries. There are problems with such an approach, firstly relief is distributed unequally and mainly to those LDCs which had borrowed more in the past, secondly, if debt relief is expected in the future, it might encourage LDCs to borrow far more than they can really afford in the current time period, and thirdly, if debt relief does happen in the future then it will destroy lenders' incentive to give loans.
4. Debt conversion: here some of the existing debt is converted into a new asset. For example, a country might convert some of its existing debt, which carries a floating market interest rate, into a new debt which carries a fixed interest rate below the market interest rate with some, if not all, future interest payments guaranteed.
5. Debt-for-debt swaps: a bank not wishing to take a loss on a loan to an LDC sells it to an investor keeping the original amount on the books but changes the terms to make it considerably more favourable

to the debtor country.

There are many other types of instruments that have also been suggested to reduce the debts faced by LDCs. These would include buybacks, re-lending, on-lending, co-financing, exit bonds, bridge finance, securitisation, and interest rate capping. On the whole all these methods fall between two categories, that is debt forgiveness on the one hand to 'muddling through' on the other.

It should not be thought that the way to solve the debt crisis was left only to the international banking sector, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been an important source of funding for debtor nations though the IMF requires borrowers to 'adjust' their economies. Such structural reform policies involve targets for macroeconomic variables such as the money supply or the reduction in government borrowing, the abolition or liberalisation of foreign exchange and import controls, etc. Some LDCs perceive the IMF as being an arm of the rich capitalist nations using policies to retain the status quo between developing and developed nations. Furthermore, it should be noted that the Fund's resources are limited and that direct financial assistance is restricted to the smaller LDCs and aid to the larger LDCs is more symbolic in nature. For example, the size of Brazil's debt was approximately the same size as the subscriptions to the Fund made by all its members. Therefore, for the IMF to help solve the debt crisis it has relied heavily on involving the international banking sector to deal with the problem through some of the schemes outlined earlier. This approach appears to have succeeded since wide-scale default and consequent bank collapse has been averted. The problems are that the banks wished to reduce their exposure to LDC debt and this partnership with the IMF actually did not allow them to do this, and secondly it forced the burden of adjustment onto some of the poorest countries of the world.

In addition, the IMF policy to reduce LDCs' indebtedness by targeting their imports has meant that reductions in these are normally in the form of capital and industrial goods which are easier to sacrifice rather than essential imports such as fuel and food. This has an adverse effect on future LDC export performance sacrificing growth in order that they can export capital. The growth rate of the 15 major debtors was 1.6% between 1983-1989 with population growth rates of 2.3% per annum, implying that living standards have been declining during this period. Nor have the developed countries escaped. S. George (1988) has estimated that up to 700,000 jobs may have been lost in the US and the UK between 1982-89 due to reduced demand for their exports to LDCs. Also by encouraging exports of primary commodities over-supply has resulted. The price reductions that followed coupled with the inelastic demands for these commodities only served to reduce the revenue for the LDCs. Concentrating on export goods rather than goods for home consumption also has its problems; some countries now feel that such policies are socially unacceptable and unworkable. In the latter part of the 1980s, 25 of the LDCs who had sought assistance from the IMF, experienced serious civil

disorder or public hostility towards the IMF imposed measures.

Both the IMF, commercial banks and the debtor governments perhaps have realised that the process of tackling the debt crisis must be through a mechanism of economic growth rather than through a process of economic restraint. Instead of simply making transfers to the LDCs so that they can keep the debt alive there is a need to return once more to a situation where there are positive net capital flows into LDCs. Once this fact was recognised it spawned a number of initiatives built on these premises such as the Baker Plan (1985), and the Brady Plan (1989).

The Baker Plan's main goal was the reduction in the net outflow of money from the highly indebted, middle income debtor countries (15 countries, 10 of which were in South America), thereby improving economic growth. The Plan required the commercial banks to re-lend $20 billion and the IMF $9 billion over three years to these countries, through country-by-country negotiations. In 1985 these countries owed $80 billion in interest to the international banking sector. The $20 billion of new loans, however, never really materialised, banks really wanted to reduce lending to debtor countries, raise new capital, and reduce their overall exposure, which is what appeared to happen so that by the end of 1988 the exposure of the banks had fallen to under 100% of capital.

The Baker Plan also highlighted a number of difficulties:

1. Although debt reduction would help the debtor countries to return to creditworthiness, banks were unwilling or were unable to lend to countries that had failed to repay their debts.
2. Stretching-out debt repayments although laudable, was deemed to be insufficient to restore prosperity.
3. Most of the money which was lent by the commercial banks went straight back to them as interest payments for earlier loans.
4. The IMF's stand-by agreements were only intended to overcome short term problems, and appeared of little use in financing a long-term programme of development. As time progressed these indebted countries began paying back their stand-bys. Thus from 1986, the IMF was receiving more in debt service from the heavily indebted LDCs than it was extending to them in new loans, a position the commercial banks had found themselves in since 1983.

Given the present state of debts by LDCs some form of 'debt forgiveness' appeared to be one of the best possible methods for overcoming the debt crisis. This was one of the elements of the Brady Plan. The commercial banks were called upon to accept an orderly process of debt reduction and were encouraged by the IMF and the World Bank with funds of $10 billion and with a similar sum to come from the Japanese government. The Plan implicitly recognised that many debtor countries would be unable to repay their commercial banks debts in full, even if the repayment period was extended. The focus on cutting the debt on a case-by-case basis contrasted with the Baker Plan which held that eventually all the commercial bank debt should be repaid on market terms. Although the Brady Plan was not hard on specifics, its general

mechanism for debt reduction was for creditor banks to agree voluntarily to reduce the value of their claims (either by reducing interest rates or principal) in return for guarantees on the remaining portion of the debt. The banks could still hold onto the existing debt in the belief that they would eventually get paid. The IMF and World Bank helped finance the guarantees either by providing collateral on the reduced value of the debt or by giving debtor governments financial support to repurchase their debt for cash at the secondary market rate. There were certain constraints to face if a country was to benefit from the Brady Plan, that was, to apply for debt reduction the debtor countries should be undertaking sound economic policies aimed at encouraging domestic savings and foreign investments and promoting the return of 'flight capital'. Perhaps the most important feature of the Plan was the view that the debt problem was seen as a development problem rather than a problem of liquidity.

The Brady Plan. therefore, relied on the 'voluntary' action of creditors to bring about the debt reduction, but there were reasons to doubt whether this 'voluntary' approach could deliver an adequate amount of debt reduction. Moreover, there was debate as to who would determine the allocation of burdens among the lenders. In addition we have the 'free rider' problem. Each individual bank could openly support the Brady Plan hoping that other banks, the IMF, Japan etc. would bear the losses. In such a voluntary arrangement all may well fail to participate. Moreover, Western European governments were not eager to support such a plan when it was mainly geared to help the US banks. Finally, if the Brady Plan tackled commercial bank claims, surely, the argument goes, it should also tackle money owed to official creditors. Debts owed to official sources were the major worry for some countries and as the Brady Plan stands these countries would still face huge debts.

It would appear that the initiatives by the international community have yielded limited, but positive, results. Between 1981 and 1987 the current account deficit of the Latin American countries was reduced by $30 billion and that of the African countries by $15 billion. The Baker Plan reduced the current account deficits of the favoured 15 countries by 1985/87 to one tenth the 1980-82 level and in addition reduced the growth in total debt.

Nevertheless, the African countries appear to be in dire straits. A number of them are heavily indebted, they have very little export cover and interest payments may up an uncomfortable proportion of exports. Primary product prices are relatively low and their exports, particularly food, face difficulties in highly protected export markets.

Many creditor nations and the commercial banks saw the debt crisis in the beginning as a short term liquidity crisis rather than a long-term development crisis. The commercial banks, too were desperate in the early years to keep all their loans alive without this fact they would have been over-exposed and many of them would have gone bankrupt. The situation had changed somewhat by the late 1980s and early 1990s as the commercial banks have put sufficient funds aside as bad debt provision helped

# THE FOREIGN RELATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY OF SPAIN. PART THREE: SPAIN, THE UNITED STATES AND NATO

**by Anthony Gooch**

**United States**

IN recent times the Spanish attitude to the United States has been coloured in essence by three historical factors:

(i) Recollection of the Spanish-American War. 'El Desastre', the débâcle of 1898, was the final traumatic episode in the long story of the Spanish Empire, involving the loss of the Philippine Islands and Cuba.

(ii) Anti-Axis Inducements and their Cessation. In World War II the United States and other Allied Powers supplied Spain with foodstuffs in order to keep Franco from throwing in his lot with Hitler and Mussolini. However, once the danger receded, the supplies ceased and Spain was left to her own devices in a situation of semi-starvation.

(iii) The 1953 Defence Treaty. Spain, not having been occupied by German forces, did not have to be freed from them. Nor did the United States rid Spain of Franco. On the contrary, the Defence Treaty of 1953 turned the US into one of the firmest pillars of the Franco State.

In 1945 the United States and the other Western democracies, which had been essentially pro-Republican in the Spanish Civil War, perceived the Franco Régime not only as a recipient of German and Italian aid in its fight against the Republic, but as having become, during World War II, a near-lackey of Hitler, as having put itself, in consequence, beyond the pale and as deserving of ostracism. Ambassadors were withdrawn, and there was no Marshall aid for the Spanish people, who thus had cruelly to pay for the sins of the Régime. The ironic, bitter-sweet film *Bienvenido, Mr. Marshall*, a minor political masterpiece, cleverly and movingly encapsulated the feelings of the ordinary Spaniard in this regard.

However, as the Cold War between East and West developed, the Americans gradually came to the realization that it was in their interest to drop their hostile, negative attitude and take advantage of a view of Spain as a highly desirable bastion in the global struggle against communism, as a 'reservoir of Western spiritual values'/*reserva espiritual de Occidente*, Franco being, to use another Régime phrase 'The Sentinel of the West'/*el centinela de Occidente*. For General Franco the Civil War had been *una cruzada cristiana contra el Anticristo comunista*/'a Christian Crusade against the communist Anti-Christ' — a reading which suddenly suited the United States admirably. The American obsession with the communist menace in the present over-rode the historical obsession with the Spanish/Axis connexion. Powerful though the old stigma was, the Cold War made natural allies out of these strange bedfellows: democratic

American and authoritarian Spain. Spain, then, seen as a totalitarian pariah, had been excluded from the American largesse disbursed to other European nations, but, with the signing of the US-Spanish Defence Treaty, a fundamental change came about. A special, tailor-made mini-Marshall Plan was devised.

Many years later, the treaty was to turn into the 'US-Spanish Agreement of Friendship and Co-operation'. That was to be in 1976, the year King Juan Carlos, together with Queen Sofía, visited Washington and delivered a historic address to the American Congress.

Back in 1953, Spain had had to pay a high price in submission to the United States, curtailment of Spanish sovereignty, and exposure, as a prime target, to Russian missiles. However, Franco needed the benefits of the treaty so badly that he was prepared to pay almost any price, and the conditions were negotiated by the military bureaucracy of the *Alto Estado Mayor*/Supreme General Staff — men that the United States under General Eisenhower found it not too difficult to do business with. It was not to be until the sixties that the career diplomats of the *Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores* would begin to play a part in negotiations with the Americans.

Thus it was that, in the fifties, the political stability of the Iberian Peninsula became the king-pin of the whole of Washington's strategy for Europe's soft underbelly, while, subsequently, the Spanish treaty was to become a model for similar treaties with other authoritarian régimes in many parts of the world.

The American volte-face, epitomised in a famous photograph of a grinning Eisenhower giving Franco a highly cordial embrace, was naturally seen by the democratic opposition both inside and outside Spain as an act of betrayal: to counter communism the United States was clearly prepared to ally with the devil, in the time-honoured tradition of Anglo-Saxon perfidy. The result was an increase in anti-United States feeling and in hostility towards NATO, an organization perceived as essentially American, such feelings being reinforced by the scant consciousness on the part of the Spanish public at large of any Soviet threat. The last foreign invasion had taken place in 1808. Spain remained perhaps even more peninsular behind the Pyrenees than Britain remained insular behind the Channel. Issues such as the zero-zero option were to make little impact on the Spanish public. In a survey held some years before the collapse of communism, 70% of Spaniards expressed the view that the USA was a greater threat to peace than the Soviet Union.

At the time of the US/Gadaffi crisis of 1986. the use of tanker aircraft from the huge base near Saragossa to re-fuel the American raiders on their way to Libya and the suspicion that, despite Felipe González's denials, other assistance had been given from bases in Spain grated on some sectors of Spanish opinion, and gave rise to arguments as to whether the greater degree of *prepotencia*/high-handedness lay with the US vis-à-vis Spain or with the Socialist Government vis-à-vis the Spanish electorate.

In the period 1987-1989, prior to and during renegotiation of the Spanish-US agreements, there were a number of attitudes in Spain towards the

Americans in general and the issue of the bases in particular. In the populace at large there were varying degrees of hostility to aspects of US policy. A posture frequently in evidence was given expression by a Madrid student quoted on 7th November 1987 in the BBC programme *From Our Own Correspondent:* 'I like Americans, but I do wish they wouldn't try to push us around'. This was an attitude that the Americans themselves had to appreciate, after all many millions of them had voted Ronald Reagan into power precisely because he promised to see to it that the United States wouldn't get pushed around any more.

The Left, embodied mainly in *Izquierda Unida,* was strongly anti-American, with a position encapsulated in the 1986 jingle *En primavera, las bases fuera*/'Come Spring, (we want) the Yankee bases out'. As leader of his *Centro Democrático y Social,* Adolfo Suárez adopted a hawkish stand on the bases issue in an effort to make as much capital as possible out of nationalist fears of loss of Spanish identity in an increasingly Americanised world.

The Conservative *Partido Popular* wanted to maintain good relations with the US, but on the basis of a fresh treaty, and thus, on this issue, coincided basically with the Socialists. No democratic government could be happy with arrangements inherited from a dictatorship. The treaty as it stood was unacceptable. Spain, now in NATO and the European Community, jealous of her hard-won democratic credentials, expected and demanded to be treated on a basis of political equality. It was essential for the Spanish Government to show the electorate that it was determined to honour its 1986 Referendum pledges and obtain substantial reductions in US forces in Spain. For many Spaniards the American presence amounted to occupation by a foreign army. The bases were felt to be *unos gibraltares interiores ocupados por los yanquis*/'a series of inland Gibraltars occupied by the Americans.' The cry *!Torrejón español!* was evidence of an irredentist feeling perhaps stronger than that behind the time-worn *!Gibraltar español!* After all, the Madrid base was in the very heart of Spain, and its recovery was therefore a prime symbol of independence. Nor would transfer of America's F-16s to Morón placate the Spaniards. It would merely take the missile-target threat away from Madrid and impose it on Seville, the home-town of Prime Minister Felipe González and of other prominent Socialists. Such a proposal was clearly out of the question. The Government, determined to assert Spanish sovereignty, adopted an unyieldingly tough stance and the negotiations bordered on the acrimonious: either the F-16s left Spain or Spain would leave NATO. Which was it to be? With Franco's military negotiators and with his men in the *Palacio de Santa Cruz* the United States had had an easy ride. The PSOE was another kettle of fish. The Americans realised the relevance to *their* situation of what many Spaniards said about *theirs: !Con Franco, vivíamos mejor!* and even *!Contra Franco, vivíamos mejor!*/'We were better off with Franco!' 'We were even better off against Franco!'

The Spanish Government had to strike a very fine balance indeed. The pledge to the electorate had to be kept and the nation's sovereignty had

to be asserted: *el orgullo español*/Spanish pride would be satisfied with nothing less. On the other hand, there was a serious danger of pushing things too far. The Americans might suddenly decide on a total pull-out, which would not be in Spain's interest. American isolationism could again become a force to reckon with. Spain was being difficult, Greece was difficult, France had always been difficult. The Europeans seemed to be biting the hand that fed them. How about bringing the boys home and leaving all those foreigners to handle their own defence?

In the end, it was arranged that the F-16s should go to Italy, ruffled feathers were smoothed, and an agreement was hammered out. Before long, of course, there was to be a totally changed climate in Europe. Détente and disarmament were in the air as never before, and one cannot but help thinking that, had the US/Spanish treaty-renewal negotiations come just a little later, there might have been far less stress.

**NATO**

In June 1982 Prime Minister Leopoldo Calvo-Sotelo, at the head of UCD/*Unión de Centro Democrático,* took Spain into NATO, to the vociferously expressed indignation of the PSOE/*Partido Socialista Obrero Español* and of those further to the left. However, as the weeks went by towards the Socialist victory in October of that same year, Felipe González trudged his long road to Damascus, becoming increasingly convinced that the 'No to NATO' position, if maintained, would be disastrous. The outcome was a policy of *ambigüedad calculada*/calculated ambiguity, enshrined in a slogan that was to become notorious: *OTAN: de entrada, no,* which could be interpreted in two startlingly different ways:

(i) 'No going into NATO for us' (somewhat absurd, since, of course, Spain already was in).

(ii) 'NATO — not to begin with, at any rate.'

Such ambiguity hardly sat well with the ticket of 'Honesty and Ethics' on which the Socialists had fought their election campaign. Moreover, a referendum was promised — ostensibly to take Spain out, but, as was to become increasingly evident, in fact to keep Spain in. Because of the stresses and strains inherent in a situation so fraught with contradiction the Government repeatedly put off the day of reckoning by arguing the greater urgency of other business: of course the referendum would be held, but it had to wait.

Foreign Minister Fernando Morán, a Socialist first and politician second, a man far less inclined to Machiavellian pragmatism than Felipe González, was deeply unhappy about the whole affair and was to be replaced before long by Francisco Fernández Ordóñez, a politician first and second and master of the pragmatic — significantly a biography of the man by José Cavero bears the simple title *El político.*

By late 1985 it had become all but impossible to put off the crunch further. The date 12 March 1986 was set, and Felipe González had to throw himself on the mercy of the electorate, confessing his error in 1982 and declaring that it was essential for Spain to stay in the Alliance, since withdrawal would jeopardise the Government's whole European and

Atlantic policy. In order to sugar the pill, important provisos were made:

(i) Spain would allow no nuclear weapons on her territory,
(ii) there would be no incorporation into the integrated military structure of the Alliance, and, above all,
(iii) substantial reductions in US forces in Spain would be sought.

Apart from other considerations, the Spanish Government had come to see a positive 'Stay in NATO' policy as an essential element bolstering their campaign for entry into the EEC. There was no official linkage, but the Spaniards were convinced that there was *psychological* linkage. Moreover, they felt that membership of NATO gave Spain a stronger hand in relation to the Gibraltar issue.

The Left were totally opposed to the *OTAN, Sí* campaign, which they regarded as utterly unprincipled, a loathsome betrayal: *Felipe, Felipito, a la OTAN tú solito'* 'Felipe, old boy, you can just stay in NATO all by yourself'. The Right, Manuel Fraga's *Alianza Popular*, wanted Spain in NATO, but advocated abstention in the Referendum to embarrass and, if possible, bring down the Government. Lord Carrington, visiting Madrid to boost NATO, found himself, a bewildered Anglo-Saxon, out of his depth in a Latin maelstrom: here was the PSOE, at heart anti-NATO, intending to vote to stay in, while AP, strongly pro-NATO, was insisting that salvation lay in abstention. Casting in his troubled mind as to what manner of label he might give to this 'extraordinary' state of affairs, he went one better than *L'Express*, which described the situation as 'loufoque', coming up with the inspired 'surrealistic'.

Despite all, the charismatic Felipe González carried the day, reinforcing Spain's European vocation and so enhancing his personal European image.

Since 1986, short of joining the integrated military structure, the Socialist Government has done everything possible to maximise Spain's importance as a NATO member, taking advantage of every opportunity to stress the Spanish contribution: Spain plays her part both in the Atlantic Council, and, despite her 'No Nukes' policy, in the Nuclear Planning Group. In addition, she endeavours to keep a high profile in the Western European Union.

And what of the NATO attitude to Spain? With her highly strategic crossroads position, she had, even in the late twentieth century, undoubted geo-military value, above all as a fabulously deep fall-back area protected by the Pyrenees. It was also useful to be able to include the great American bases in Spain within the NATO structure. The Spanish Armed Forces were of limited usefulness, especially the Army, which, under Franco, had become a political institution whose role was, in essence, not to repel any attack from without, but to deter possible subversion from within — a lumbering, out-moded military machine noted for its loyalty, but hardly for its efficiency. On the other hand, the Air Force and the Navy, far leaner and more modern, were useful additions to the Allied armoury.

However, in a post-Berlin Wall, post-Warsaw Pact, post-communist Europe, the political value of NATO to Spain is clearly far greater than the military value of Spain to NATO.

# IS THE TRIANGLE STILL GOLDEN? THE POLITICS OF OPIUM AND THE NEW REGIME IN THAILAND

## by Charles Foster

THE north of Thailand is a strange place. The cloud forest of the highlands pushes up between Laos and Burma (which now insists on calling itself Myanmar). Neither neighbour is very friendly to Thailand. But the hill tribes know nothing of the borders. They wander more or less where they want, slashing and burning and leaving sterile black holes in the deep green of the hills. This is the Golden Triangle, where most of the world's opium comes from. The forests are dotted with heroin refineries and crossed by mule tracks along which the cargoes go out to the ethnic Chinese syndicates in Thailand, and, increasingly, Myanmar and Laos, which feed the world's markets.

It is hard not to see evidence of the trade. When the poppies are in flower the hillsides glow red, and in the hot season travellers marching to the villages crash through fields of bent stalks. Some of the bell-like heads containing the seeds are still there, and the seeds rattle inside the pods as you brush past.

Many of the tribesmen themselves smoke opium, and addiction is an increasing problem amongst the young. Cynics in the towns say that there are two types of tribes: the poor and happy ones, who smoke opium and don't sell it; and the rich and stressed ones, who sell but don't smoke. Commercial prudence and personal opium consumption are not found together. The smokers use opium for relaxation, sex and medicine. Two pipes produce a sense of well-being. Five pipes are said to increase male sexual stamina. The tribesmen say that regular smoking prevents malaria and, more believably, that it eases the pain of their constant gut diseases. Apparently thirty pipes kill.

All ages and both sexes use the drug, and venerate people with high opium tolerance as 'opium professors'. At night, on the bamboo floors of the stilt houses, the pigs still grunting a few feet below, the users melt the resin and use a thin stick to smear it onto the pinhole aperture of a carved wooden pipe. Then they lie down, heads resting on a rolled blanket, to pull the sweet-smelling blue smoke. For ten baht a pipe (about 20p) they let the sillier travellers try.

Opium cultivation in the Golden Triangle is a relatively new industry. Arab merchants introduced the Chinese to opium in the late thirteenth century, and its medicinal value soon created a demand which was met by the hill tribe cultivators of southern China, who found that the poppies grew well in their thin soil. For a number of complex reasons the hill tribes migrated south. Many did so after the Second World War, because China and Burma, never tolerant of inflammable minorities, became brutal. The tribes took their poppies with them, and cultivation began in the triangle which is formed by Laos, Myanmar and Thailand. The triangle

was not yet Golden: it took the Vietnam war to do that. But the foundations for a big industry were laid. Chief amongst its architects and later chief amongst its princes was Khun Sa, the grand opium warlord of South East Asia: part Chinese, part Shan. He has ridden the turning tides of Indo-Chinese politics very cleverly. His first appearance was with the Kuomintang (KMT), the exiled nationalist army of Chiang Kai Shek which had taken refuge in Burma. Their money for the continuing war against Communist China came from the CIA sponsored smuggling of opium. And that was where Khun Sa was useful. During the 1950s and 60s he was a crucial adviser to the KMT. But he did not remain an employee for long. In the early 1960s he set up his own opium-running venture in northern Thailand, using the contacts gained during the KMT years. Since then Khun Sa has spoken with a number of alternating and contradictory voices. Sometimes he has been a principled Shan nationalist, and has used the rhetorical power of nationalism to bind an exiled people closely and bloodily to him. He developed and armed the Shan United Army (SUA), which now acts as his personal bodyguard and finances its own anti-Burmese operations by acting as the controller and courier of much of the Golden Triangle's opium.

Sometimes he has been an agent of Burmese government policy. In 1966 he was engaged by the Burmese to stamp on the Burmese Communist Party (BCP). That, of course, he was only too happy to do. If he does have political sympathies, they seem to be genuinely anti-communist, and the contract allowed him to strangle his own trade competitors in the opium market (the BCP) and gave him an excuse to boost the SUA without the Burmese getting too worried.

Sometimes he has been a tub-thumping American imperialist. When the Americans moved into Vietnam the opium barons were delighted. There was now a big local market amongst the GIs, and Khun Sa, with his solidly anti-communist credentials, was an important and well paid intermediary in the CIA's own heroin trafficking which it used to pay for its shadowy games throughout the region.

Mostly, though, Khun Sa has been a master businessman, pretending to be nothing else. He has had a colourful time. In 1967 the KMT tried to end SUA involvement in opium by sealing the mule-tracks into Thailand and Burma. Khun Sa resisted, there was a lot of shooting, and the blockade was broken. But Khun Sa himself, along with a bunch of SUA troops, was routed into Laos and pushed into the arms of Burmese customs officials. It took until 1975 for Khun Sa to bribe his way out of his Burmese prison. But when he did so, he found that the Burmese had been working steadily and unwittingly away on his behalf. They had smashed up the KMT's hold on the opium business. The USA pulled out of the area at about this time, and so Khun Sa had no serious competitors. He took full advantage of the vacuum, multiplying the number and sophistication of his refineries and consolidating his hold on the farmers and the conduits out of the region.

As soon as the Americans ceased to have any great interest in Indo-

China, their narcotics policy reversed. Heroin on the New York streets was electorally embarrassing. And so the United States tried to undo the work its secret service had laboriously done during the 60s and 70s. It found an ally in the Thai government. This was no surprise. Firstly, Thailand has always been uneasy about the explosive potential of the minority groups in the north. Their alliances shift very quickly, and Thailand cannot afford to let any of them get too powerful. Thailand is also unpleasantly close to some nasty Communist nations, and so needs a bit of American stroking to calm its nerves. And, finally, Thailand is a poor land. Any contributions from ideologically decent nations are gratefully received.

America's Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) had a big cheque book. It paid out enough to Thailand to suppress the opium trade for the White House to be able to answer potentially embarrassing questions. Not much of the money was spent on eliminating opium. Most of it found its way into the private bank accounts of Thai officials. Some kind of show was necessary for the DEA's archives, however, and so the Thai army would (and does) occasionally hack down some poppy fields in northern Thailand. And that is about it. Everyone seems happy with the system. Everyone, of course, except the heroin addicts and the poppy farmers, many of whom grow nothing but opium and, after an army operation, have to shift on or starve until the next season's poppy crop.

There have been other efforts. The Thai royal family promoted a crop substitution programme, which offered incentives to hill tribes to grow crops other than opium. The scheme, by and large, has been a dismal failure. The tribes are poor, and opium pays better than tea. They are also conservative and independent, and resent efforts to force them to conform to the norms of a country which they do not call home.

In 1982-83, in an ultimately counter-productive show of zeal, Thai troops forced Khun Sa out of Thailand into the mountains shadowing the Kok river valley in Burma. This meant that Khun Sa had to re-organize a little, but he suffered no great harm. Indeed, it served Khun Sa well. For the communist regime in Laos, seeing that there is a lot of badly needed money to be made by sponsoring opium, have created an opium haven in Laos. Khun Sa's tentacles spread deep into Laos. The Thai army's shells merely forced him to change the addresses of some of his branch offices. Khun Sa does not seem to be in competition with the Laotian government: there is a happy symbiosis. The trading continues, but with less risk and with a national crest on the headed notepaper.

On February 24th 1991 a military coup toppled the Thai government. This was no great surprise to anybody. Military coups are commonplace there. The average Thai regards them, with bored familiarity, as the usual method of administering a political enema. The people carry on shuffling round the paddy-fields regardless. This time, however, there is hope of a real change for the better. The Bangkok businessmen are quietly happy with the new regime. Foreign investors are snuffling busily round the fledgling industries, and the financial services men, nervous about the future of Hong Kong, are wondering seriously whether a move to Thailand

might be worth their while. The new government is a patrician one of old-guard feudal conservatives. It promises to cut corruption by slashing red tape, and the foreign men in suits are very encouraged by that. It is apparently very conservation conscious. It hates Communists. Its principles and personalities have been applauded in the recent election.

There is a good deal of speculation in Bangkok about how all this will affect the opium trade. The Thailand envisaged by the new government is a glittering free-enterprise zone, culturally closer to New York than to Kuala Lumpar. It hopes that it can rely on the Americans to underwrite the dream and to stop Peking or its satellites from spoiling it. It knows too that much of the corruption which clogs the wheels of Thai business feeds on opium. To entice the Americans, Thailand will have to be a cleaner and smoother place in which to trade stocks and shares.

There is some early evidence of anti-opium zeal. At the end of March 1991, Thai fighter planes and helicopter gunships strafed warring drug armies on the Thai-Myanmar border. Partly this was because the drug factions were getting too excited too near Thai territory: a mortar shell had landed on a Thai village, killing three Thais. The story made the headlines of the English papers in Bangkok and embarrassed the new government. There were three reasons for the embarrassment. Firstly, Khun Sa's army, the Muang Thai, was involved. In 1989 a New York jury had convicted Khun Sa of smuggling heroin into the USA, and the Thais thought that his presence so near to Thai territory might suggest that they were not taking America's interests seriously enough.

Secondly, Thailand is trying to develop tourism in the Golden Triangle area. 'Thailand: the Land of Smiles,' simpers the poster. There were few smiles in Thaton, the damaged village, on March 24th 1991. And Thaton, say the tourist brochures, is where you pick up your bamboo raft for an idyllic drift down the Kok river.

Thirdly, and most significantly, the government was concerned that the north of Thailand would be seen as a wild anarchic land, beyond the reach or rule of Bangkok, where outlaws had private kingdoms, private armies, private legal systems and enormous private and untaxable fortunes. All of which is perfectly true. But a gesture was needed to convince the people and Washington and Khun Sa that, although it was only a month old, the government meant what it said, or what, given a little encouragement, it intended to say.

To convince the West that it is in earnest, Thailand will have to do more than fly its OV10 counter-insurgency planes occasionally over Chiang Rai province. The real work will have to be done by the security men in the Bangkok offices who are charged with the hunting of the big heads: the Chinese middlemen who shift heroin across the frontiers and keep the refineries bubbling. Also, some realistic alternative livelihood will have to be found for the thousands of hill tribesmen who depend on poppy growing. Khun Sa insists that he has already moved out of the narcotics world and is now a simple cattle, jade, and timber trader. Nobody believes him, although it is probably true that much of his opium money comes

nowadays from the taxation of the profits of other dealers operating in his territory. But his insistence is significant, and may indicate an intention to change to new things. Khun Sa is not a young man, and his nine lives must be almost used up. To run heroin you need luck, confidence and an army. There are easier ways to earn a living. There are signs that Khun Sa is trying to brush up his image before posterity takes over. He has decided to let history view him as a Shan resistance fighter. He claims that he has been misrepresented by the press. 'It is time I do a disappearing act and let the Shan people bear witness for me', he said in a recent statement.

If the grand employer disappears, or shifts industries, will the whole region shift with him? It is no longer true to say that Khun Sa 'is' the opium industry of the Golden Triangle. But he is pivotally important, both as an individual and as a barometer of the forces impinging on the opium industry as a whole. Slowly, perhaps, the poppies will wither. The government is trying harder than ever to strangle them.

Yet the alternative industries present other problems for the government. Ironically, these too are problems resulting from the need to impress the West. The possible industries are timber, cattle, tea and coffee. The problems are environmental ones. The timber is teak. Thailand and its neighbours have some of the world's largest remaining stocks of this valuable hardwood. Newly green western governments protest loudly at their decimation. Yet the contracts which were made in 1989 between Myanmar and Thai logging companies to remove Myanmar's teak forests were sponsored by the Thai army, who were the unseen beneficiaries of many such agreements. And the men now at the helm of government are, of course, army men — those who encouraged or countenanced the start of the teak venture. Tea, coffee and cattle present the same problems. The trees have to come down before the cows can graze or the tea bushes grow.

The government, then, is in an impossible position. If it does not stamp on the narcotics trade and its corrupt children, the West will not smile as broadly as Thailand wants it to. If it does cut down Khun Sa and his descendants, it will force northern Thailand into environmentally distasteful policies which, again, will alienate the West.

If anything happens, it will happen slowly. For the foreseeable future Khun Sa will continue to send his mule trains through the high forest and the bamboo thickets to the little jungle airstrips, and the poppies will still glow on the mountain fields of Chiang Rai.

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[Charles Foster is completing a book about northern India.]

# MELTDOWN OF AUTHORITY: SOVIET-DESIGNED NUCLEAR PLANTS COURT DISASTER

## by Thomas Land

MOUNTING energy shortages are forcing Armenia to re-open the Yerevan nuclear power plant which was shut down after earthquake damage in 1989. Lithuania is operating the Ignalina reactor without routine maintenance checks in order to obtain the biggest possible energy yield. Four of the six reactors in Bulgaria's Kozloduy plant, which have been condemned by specialists of the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) after a very thorough safety examination, are still being operated in rotation, two at a time while the other two are undergoing repairs.

These and other instances of managers risking catastrophe in the operation of the largely obsolete nuclear plants of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union coincide with revelations of a long list of hitherto suppressed recent accidents, some of them claiming many lives.

Their practical implications for the energy industry — and the many other industries dependent upon it — are enormous because they demonstrate that the reactors are now being operated in a safety regime far more dangerous than that previously controlled by the Kremlin.

Dr. Hans Blix, the deeply concerned director general of the IAEA in Vienna, has offered to mobilize help for the republics joining the Commonwealth of Independent States that has replaced the Soviet Union. Sweden is helping Lithuania with the establishment of an independent nuclear power authority. British Nuclear Fuels and France's Cogema have opened negotiations with East European governments and contractors from Western Europe, the United States and Canada are seeking business in the region.

At stake is the future of 62 largely obsolete Soviet-designed nuclear power plants, most of them in Europe and 17 in the fledgling Eastern and Central European democracies. A recent IAEA study has identified some of them in formerly communist-dominated Europe as the most dangerous on earth.

A quarter of the electricity consumed by the territories of the former Soviet Union west of the Ural mountains is generated by nuclear power. Dr. Blix fears that, in the absence of a central regulatory authority, too much responsibility for the maintenance of safety standards will fall on the individual plant operators in the independent republics. And at times of economic and political stress and intensifying pressure for power production caused by acute shortages of alternative fuels, this could lead to new nuclear plant disasters with incalculable consequences.

The death of the Soviet Union was preceded by the withdrawal of the Soviet nuclear experts who had operated the Kozloduy plant; and it was followed by the meltdown of the country's central safety and regulatory authority previously administered from Moscow. Today, the plants are

owned by the governments controlling them but their operators are effectively answerable to no one for the maintenance of acceptable safety standards. Several Western governments have responded by sending specialists and equipment to the most dangerous plants to ward off disaster and the IAEA is exploring the introduction of a collective safety regime based on accord linking the former Soviet republics.

The unprecedented decision to reopen the Yerevan nuclear plant was taken by Armenian parliamentary deputies wearing their overcoats in their unheated house of assembly. The plant stands on a seismic fault line. It was shut down three years ago after an earthquake which was then said to have damaged the reactors beyond economically justifiable repair. One of them was also said to be too old and ready for decommissioning anyway.

A 400 mw unit is now expected to start up by next winter and a second to follow in 1993, eventually producing a surplus of electricity for export. At present, the unreliable oil and coal deliveries from Russia exacerbated by the economic blockade maintained by neighbouring Azerbaijan have led to the closure of hundreds of industrial plants. The flow of nuclear electricity is expected to relieve pressure on local hydro-electric plants which is in turn held responsible for a dangerous current drop in the water level of Lake Sevan.

Lithuania's Ignalina plant should have been closed for routine maintenance on January 29. Its operators believe that they must forego maintenance for the time being and run the plant to capacity to meet painful energy shortages. One of Ignalina's reactors was shut down, nevertheless, early in February following a radiation leak, and an engineer was arrested on charges of sabotaging the plant's computer system.

The Baltic republics are almost entirely dependent on nuclear power generation. Their energy crisis is so severe that Ignalina's managers feel justified to take the calculated risk with their plant — the world's biggest Chernobyl-type reactor — despite the poor safety record of its design. Finnish and Swedish nuclear experts have conducted a comprehensive examination of the nuclear power industry of the Baltic and Russia and have expressed grave concern over prevailing safety standards.

Bulgaria's Kozloduy plant won top priority status for Western assistance after the exposure of its safety standards by the IAEA last year. The biggest and most modern of its reactors supplying 40 per cent of the national electricity consumption has been shut down since the inspection by a long series of problems, including fires and a fault in a water pump. Bulgaria has told the IAEA that it dares not retire the reactors condemned by the report for fear of crippling the national energy network.

New revelations of recent nuclear accidents in the former Soviet Union include the deaths of 14 workers caused by a burst valve at the Balakovo plant in 1985 and major radiation leakages at the Byeloarsky and the St. Petersburg plants. An accident and substantial radiation leak at the Sosnovy Bor nuclear station in March has led to calls for the closure of all aging Chernobyl-type reactors.

The future is bleak. Nuclear plant operators in Eastern and Central Europe must decide very soon what to do with their fast accumulating radioactive wastes which the central supervisory authority of the civil atomic power industry of the former Soviet Union can no longer handle. Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary are expected separately to announce plans shortly for the construction of extensive new dry storage facilities to house spent fuel for perhaps 50 years.

Nuclear wastes generated by the Soviet-designed reactors used to be taken back to the Soviet Union for reprocessing. Since the late 1980s, the Soviets insisted on charging for the service which they had previously provided for free. Late last year they announced their inability to accept shipments.

Chaos in the Soviet nuclear power industry first became evident in the West when German Environment Minister Klaus Toepfer was told in Moscow late in October that the country simply lacked the means to take back spent fuel despite its contractual obligations.

Germany, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria — the very countries saddled with the most dangerous Soviet-built reactors abroad — as well as Hungary must find their own solutions. Toepfer has responded with a call for a joint Western approach to a problem of global proportions probably involving all the nuclear plants of the former Soviet Union as well as the democracies of Eastern and Central Europe.

Germany has closed down the notorious Soviet-built Greifswald nuclear plant for safety reasons. Spare parts from Greifswald are destined for the Kozloduy plant in northern Bulgaria which has been condemned by the IAEA study because of its shoddy safety equipment, poor staff training standards and frequently recurring radiation leaks. The makeshift waste storage facilities near the Bulgarian plant on the Danube are very dangerous and likely in any case to reach capacity within a matter of months.

Czechoslovakia, whose Bohunice plant was also condemned by the IAEA study as well as safety investigators from neighbouring Austria, is also storing spent nuclear fuel near the reactors in conditions causing grave concern. The store is unsafe, according to an unpublished report commissioned by Greenpeace, the environmental pressure group, because the concrete used in the construction is not waterproof and the storage tanks were not designed for long-term use.

The technology, infrastructure and safety procedures of Hungary's Paks nuclear power complex were highly regarded by the IAEA inspectors, but the country's temporary waste storage facilities are still inadequate. The future of Hungary's nuclear construction programme remains unresolved pending studies of markets and energy alternatives. Hungary may indeed embark on nuclear power generation for export to neighbouring Austria and Italy which themselves refuse to operate atomic power plants. Western Europe faces a new threat from the East.

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[Thomas Land is an author and foreign correspondent who writes on global affairs.]

# WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GREEN MOVEMENT?

## by David Edwards

THE silence that has come to surround environmental issues is deafening. From the impression created, we might be forgiven for thinking that all is right with the world, that this muteness reflects a sense of easy security in the knowledge that the crises, which at one time seemed to imperil humanity itself, are now safely 'under control'.

Certainly, this contrasts markedly with the eruption of public concern following the catastrophes of Chernobyl and the discovery of wide-scale ozone depletion. Then, as if over-night, industry and government found their agendas filled with a whole new range of issues for which the public demanded answers and action. Subsequent broad scientific agreement over the imminent probability of drastic global warming led, for a while, to the quite extraordinary prospect that the industrial nations might actually be forced to ease back on the throttle of economic growth in the realization that an unquestioned faith in the possibility of endless 'progress' might have had its day. For the industrial nations — whose whole sense of identity has been built on precisely this idea of a progressive, triumphal march to some utopian future of infinite wealth, power and leisure — the idea that we might, in fact, have got it wrong, came as a truly unprecedented shock. Indeed, it is difficult to adequately stress the scale of culture-shock implied by even the suggestion that the existing sense of progressive history, of human direction, might have to be reassessed for the sake of sheer survival.

Yet this was exactly the challenge which, for a time, seemed to have been laid down by the Green movements when, for a brief moment in this country, the Green Party actually became the third party.

Today, with the Green political pulse barely detectable at one per cent and Jonathon Porritt warning that the Green Party has 'all but disappeared as a serious political force', we have to ask — what on earth has happened to the Green movement?

Environmental concern has not lessened because the problems have gone away. Last summer, *The Stratospheric Ozone Review Group* reported that ozone depletion over Europe had reached 8 per cent predicted to rise to 20 per cent by 1997. More recently (February 1992), however, NASA has confirmed EC-commissioned research suggesting that 50 per cent more ozone-depleting chemicals are now present in the atmosphere over Europe than have ever previously been found elsewhere. As a consequence, both research agencies have predicted catastrophic ozone depletion of between 30-40 per cent over Europe this Spring (United Nations studies have indicated that a one per cent depletion of ozone would lead to an increase of 70,000 new cases of non-melanomic skin cancers). 'Our conclusion is that the immune system of the atmosphere — its ability to fight ozone-destroying chemicals — is weaker than we suspected,' NASA scientist Professor James Anderson has said, adding — 'None of the news is good'.

The vulnerability of animal and plant life (especially the foundation-stones of the great food-chains such as plankton) to ultra-violet radiation is not in doubt. Forty per cent ozone depletion would herald unimaginable and unprecedented environmental chaos.

The uncertainties surrounding global warming are well known and many have sought a dangerous comfort in them. These same people, however, seem to choose to remain unaware of the extraordinary level of agreement among climatologists regarding the reality of global warming. The disagreement lies not in the existence but in the extent of global warming. The fact is that all current climate models suggest that global warming will take place somewhere between 10 and 100 times faster than living systems have experienced since man has walked the earth. While many climatologists have sought greater accuracy than this in the study of possible feedback effects (for example, of oceans, clouds and snowy terrain) in amplifying or suppressing global warming, the literally infinite complexity of the climate systems involved has, so far, made accurate and conclusive prediction impossible. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, representing more than 300 of the world's best climate scientists, last year suggested that even another decade of scientific research might not help us in our quest for complete certainty. The report concluded: 'The complexity of the (climate) system means that we cannot rule out surprises'.

In other words, if we are to wait until all doubt has been removed, before taking action, we will be waiting a very long time indeed! Moreover, at the end of this wait, our inaction may have made catastrophe inevitable. Meanwhile, a significant minority of climatologists are beginning to talk in different terms about something else — the 'Runaway Greenhouse Effect'.

These, the two highest-profile environmental-crises — massive ozone-depletion and global warming — are still there. Our blissful silence matters, of course, not one jot to the chemical reactions taking place over our heads in our atmosphere, to the increased levels of ultra-violet light already filtering through to the earth's surface.

While these crises almost seem to be worsening in direct proportion to the growth of our indifference, so too many other serious problems have begun to assail us with almost no general public awareness. One example of this type of ignored disaster concerns the global extinction of frogs and toads. To many people it will come as news to hear that scientists have discovered that, across all continents, right around the world, millions of frogs and toads are dying. Even in areas apparently unaffected by serious pollution, the slumps in amphibian populations have been astonishing. The journal *Science* recently revealed, for example, that researchers studying the Western Toad in central Oregon have found that, for the past two years, almost 100 per cent of all toad eggs have inexplicably died in the early stages of development. Similarly, in Britain, frogs and toads are now suddenly close to extinction. A survey carried out by Trent Polytechnic in Nottingham showed that populations of the once Common

Frog have plummeted to below 30 per cent of their former levels. Another study by the Nature Conservancy Council — which would normally anticipate finding frogs, toads and newts in eight out of ten ponds in Britain — found them in less than half that number.

If this story strikes us as trivial or amusing, we might do well to heed the words of the amphibian expert, Dr. Mary Swan: 'Frogs like the common frog are not sensitive indicators of environmental problems. They are insensitive ones. They are quite hardy. If they are suffering, and they are, something very serious is happening to our environment'.

This is just one of the 'forgotten' catastrophes taking place around us. Meanwhile, the outlook for our silent society is ultra-violet bright — ninety million additional human beings continue to arrive every year, with the world population expected to double to around 11 billion by the middle of the next century; 1.2 billion people are now living in 'absolute poverty' as defined by the United Nations; 26 billion tons of top-soil continue to be lost every year through erosion and 'efficient-farming'; by 2020, there will be only fragments of untouched rainforest left anywhere in the world. The list goes on. The simple lesson is that the desire to raise and discuss these crises, not the crises themselves, has disappeared.

So what, we ask again, has become of the will to do something about these crises? Following the previous arguments, some may be reminded here of what has come to be known as 'compassion fatigue' — the idea that, ultimately, even the most conscience-stricken individual becomes saturated by 'doom-laden' calls to action.

The explosion of Green concern in the eighties has been taken and turned, not into genuine action, but into products and votes used to reinforce the position of those determined to maintain the system — the idea of 'progress' — as it is. All around us, we are surrounded by instances of inaction parading as action, of old wine parading in new Green bottles. For example, whilst European consumption of Halon gases (three times as ozone-depleting as the main CFCs) has been cut by 50 per cent, Indian Halon gas consumption between 1985 and 1990, has risen from 8 to 500 tonnes — mostly supplied by Britain and the United States. How much genuine concern lay behind Proctor & Gamble's £300,000 purchasing of the World Wild Fund For Nature's logo to endorse the spurious claims of its products? How much genuine concern lay behind Eastern Electricity's call for us to use more rather than less electricity to combat global warming (a suggestion for which they were awarded the 'Friends of the Earth Green Con of the Year Award')? The truth is that industry remains as aggressively profit-oriented as ever. According to the logic of that orientation, environmental issues are important only as PR issues.

Similarly, the most important achievement of the current government's environment White Paper, was the setting-up of new Green machinery in Whitehall, driven by two new cabinet committees. Marvellous! Except that we know that the first of these committees — chaired by Michael Heseltine — met only twice in its first twelve months, whilst the other —

chaired by the Prime Minister — met just once! Again, that White Paper's best proposals concerned measures to combat global warming vigorously, particularly through energy conservation. Yet, even top officials admit that next to nothing has been done — Select Committees from both Houses of Parliament have condemned the Government's lack of action.

As things stand, the government, like industry has a straight-forward vested interest in promoting unrestrained economic growth and preserving the environment costs money, eats profits, eats into economic growth, reduces wealth, reduces employment, reduces the chances of being re-elected. Both industry and government have powerful reasons for creating the impression of doing something about environmental crises rather than of actually doing it.

The effects of these skin-deep solutions to our environmental problems have been two-fold. Firstly, they have created the false impression among many people that 'something is being done' — when either it isn't or is being made worse — and that therefore they need no longer concern themselves with these problems. The huge power of government and industry to influence the public regardless of the actual truth, suggests that it is pathetically easy to fool people and do nothing.

Secondly, the massive inertia of industry and government against doing anything to deal with the appalling problems that face us, leads to a sense of hopelessness and disillusionment among people who have been misled.

However, and more importantly, I think the source of what goes by the name of 'compassion fatigue', this silence in the face of crisis, lies beyond even industrial/political indifference and manipulation. The truth is far more insidious and problematic even than cynicism.

Everyday, each of us is bombarded by an endless call to live life in a particular way, in a way we have to live for economic growth to be maximised. For this to happen, we have to live as the producers would wish us to live — in a carefree, high-consuming manner.

After all, the article in *The Observer* reporting The Stratospheric Ozone Review Group's findings of eight per cent European ozone depletion on July 20, 1991, measured just seven inches by five inches at the bottom of page three! How could a report of even this seriousness compete with the vast mass of articles, adverts and editorial encouraging us, not to doubt, or question the direction of society, but to embrace the immediate concerns of the day, the concerns that necessitate our first accepting their central premise of the desirability of unrestrained economic growth?

The truth is that the Green movement — like so many issues fundamentally challenging our preconceptions about ourselves and our society — has fallen victim to the over-whelming conforming influence of our consumer culture to eat, drink, plan, consume and above all think, as 'normal'! In this way, even approaching catastrophe has come to be turned into a passing fashion, a way to win votes and sell products. The only hope for the Green movement, for the environment, lies in our ability to see that the 'normal' is not, in fact, normal any more!

# A LETTER FROM ISRAEL

## by Michael L. Nash

'I got stoned on the West Bank', read the slogan on the T-shirt for sale in Old Jerusalem. That ambiguous motif sums up in itself the combination of the political and the profane, which nestles next to the sacred and timeless in modern Israel. I had been in Israel 20 years ago on a travellling scholarship, which lasted for nine weeks. This time the invitation to return was for one week only.

As someone recently said to me, 'we should not confuse accuracy with truth'. This is something to ponder on, but if it means that statistics may be literally true, but may evade the truth, and that the truth is present in impressions, then in this light I offer my own truths about Israel. Israel is first and foremost a land of contradictions. It is orderly and it is disorderly; it is organised and it is disorganised. It is radical and it is conservative. It is traditional and it is avant garde. It is tasteful and it is tasteless. It is cultured and it is vulgar. How can it possibly be all of these things? Well, it is.

Jerusalem is, like so many capital cities, (and other cities for that matter) perpetually being rebuilt and dug up. There is so much litter everywhere and so much disruption. The Arabs themselves seem to be, perhaps are, the victims of much squalor, even if it is to those of us who can go back to orderly homes, colourful squalor. There are so many little streetwise Arab boys, so much pestering by so many wanting to sell you trinkets, postcards and chewing gum, and offering you the best exchange rates for your money, (if they can spot that you are American, English or German). Why isn't the litter cleaned up? It is a real eye-sore. But here again we have the contrast. In old Jaffa, (Yaffo to the Israelis) it is indeed cleaned up, probably never was there in the first place; in Acre (or Akko) it is not. There is a prevailing atmosphere of neglect. Everything needs a good face-lift. Electric flexes hang from walls; buildings need repair. Yet in Haifa there is no litter problem. Why is this? Because in the 1930s a far-sighted Mayor of Haifa decided that the litter problem can only be cured by educating the children. Now that generation, and subsequent ones, are proud that Haifa has no litter.

While on this vexatious subject, there is a little oasis of calm and clean in Jerusalem (actually there are many). This one is the Garden Tomb, which may or may not be the place where Christ was interred. It is owned by the English, and as near as possible, it is like an Oriental English garden, with water and no litter! Of course, it reminds us that the first problem in Israel is not the Intifada, it is not the security problems, or the hostages, or the occupied territories, or the influx of Jews from Russia and Ethiopia, it is water. There is never enough water. On the last day of our visit it rained. Israel has not had enough rain this year, and a drought is dreaded. Even though it may be a cycle of nature, the olive crop has not materialised this year. There are hardly any olives.

The Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee are between four and ten feet lower than they should be at this time of year. But what can be done? All the Semitic peoples, Jew and Arab and Druse and Bedouin, are stoical and resigned in the face of nature or God, or whatever cannot be changed at once. Much can be attempted of course. The Israelis regret that Sinai, where they had made much progress, has now been returned to the Egyptians, its rightful owners, but also to the desert.

Since its inception, the State of Israel has lived in a state of flux. Every single year is a dramatic one. This mood is infectious. The Jewish people are an intense, active people by nature, and they live as much on their nerves now as they did twenty years ago. Sometimes their attitude is maddening and illogical and obstinate. As English people, (or British) we should appreciate this, because this is just what we are. It may very well be the reason why the Jews and the Jewish religion has survived. The extreme religious parties hold the balance of power in the Knesset, the Parliament, and sometimes demand strange conditions for their support. A road was being dug up in Tiberias because these parties thought it 'might' have been over a Jewish cemetery. They were not sure, but they weren't taking any risks. The disruption can be imagined.

Yet when one is at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, all that is left of the Temple, (and at that, it is an outer courtyard wall) one cannot but be impressed by the belief that the Divine Presence has never left this place. The Wall itself is stuffed with little bits of paper, petitions to the Almighty, asking him to solve problems great and petty. Every night the soldiers on duty come and remove them. There are so many, if they were all allowed to remain, they would damage the fabric. I left one there. The Orthodox Jews cannot decide where the Old Temple was: as our Israeli guide said, 'Was it a hundred yards to the left or a hundred yards to the right?' Why isn't the Temple rebuilt, when so much building is going on? Then the religious Jews could stop wearing black and wear ordinary clothes, for they are in mourning for the destruction of the Temple in AD 73. The reason seems to be that they are waiting for the other Jews to behave properly and strictly, for until this is achieved, the Temple cannot be rebuilt. The State of Israel itself is to them a blasphemy, for it is a secular one.

From the Mount of Olives one can see the Golden Gate, where Christ entered on a donkey, his day of triumph. Now it is sealed and before it lies a Moslem cemetery, which of course cannot be moved now. Yet wasn't this a political act during the Middle Ages? Can't political acts be undone?

The extreme religious Jews will not go up on the Temple Mount, which is now dominated by the two mosques of Omar and Al-Acqsar. While we were in one of them, something amused us (I can't remember what) and we laughed. The guide was appalled. Putting a finger to his lips he said, 'It is forbidden to laugh'.

An old imam reading the Koran looked at us severely. Religious sensitivity is only just below the surface. It was just outside this mosque that

King Abdullah, the grandfather of King Hussein, was assassinated. There is no plaque to commemorate it. Perhaps only the English put up blue plaques. But it is remembered. It is one of the reasons why King Hussein feels so anxious about coming to terms with Israel. It was an extreme Moslem who killed his grandfather. Hussein was sixteen years old, and he was there. Relations between Jordan and Israel are much more cordial than between Egypt and Israel, and this after thirteen years of peace with Egypt. A bus leaves Tel-Aviv every day for Cairo, but the Egyptians do not visit Israel. The Israelis themselves are not sure about American policy any more. A poster in Jerusalem reads 'Baker is the Ugly American'.

Yet at ground level, there is co-operation. There is a modus vivendi. Our agent, who met us at the airport and welcomed us, said, 'We live together and have no problems. It is the politicians who have the problems'. Our guide was an Israeli, who had lived in Jerusalem for 45 years. Our driver was an Arab from Nazareth. They were very old friends.

Israel is an inexhaustible experience, whether it is in the company, the sights, the wonderful variety of food, the exhilarating air of Masada or the sombre reality of the Golan Heights. But in the last resort it is also unpredictable.

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# THE HEART OF VICTORIAN ENGLAND

## by James Munson

EVERY May the public has a rare opportunity to see one of England's most unusual royal buildings. The Royal Mausoleum at Frogmore, the final resting place for Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, stands apart. Its copper roof, now turned a gentle green, is just visible among the trees in Windsor Great Park. The visitor reaches it by walking down the Long Walk. The building seems to have been transplanted from Ravenna and set down in the midst of a quintessentially English landscape. Few buildings in England are more poignant in their memories and few embody the character of their creator more than the Royal Mausoleum.

Queen Victoria's decision to build a special resting place for herself and Prince Albert had been taken before his early death in December, 1861. Albert's father had been buried in a mausoleum at Coburg after his death in 1844 and her own mother, the Duchess of Kent (who was also Albert's aunt) decided on a classical mausoleum for herself. The site she chose was at Frogmore, in the grounds near Frogmore House which had become her residence. Indeed, as she lay dying in 1861 the builders could be seen from her windows on their way to the unfinished structure.

It was therefore not surprising that Victoria should herself choose Frogmore after Albert's death, or that she should choose to have a mausoleum. The alternative would have been burial in the vaults of St George's Chapel, Windsor. This proposal filled the Queen with horror. She had always disliked Windsor, even before the Prince's death. She remembered the appalling scene enacted there in the months before she came to the throne, when her 'Uncle-King', William IV, attacked her mother at a state dinner to celebrate his birthday. To her own dying day she shuddered when she saw the room to which she had fled in tears. She especially disliked the rows of coffins which filled the crypt underneath the glories of St George's Chapel, just above. There the remains of the martyred King Charles I lie near those of the Tudor despot, Henry VIII.

Windsor, however, symbolised much more than this: it embodied the spirit of the bad old days — of George III, blind and senile and of her 'wicked uncles'. With Albert she had established what she saw as a new dynasty, not just in name but in spirit, and it must be made clear to the nation that Albert, to whom all was owed, could not be buried in just one more coffin in the royal vaults. A special structure was needed to express in stone the new era. The Orleans dynasty in France, after Louis Philippe succeeded his deposed Bourbon cousin, Charles X, in 1830, had done the same thing. They had rejected St Denis for a new mausoleum at Dreux: Victoria had always befriended the Orleans family and the example was not lost. The Mausoleum at Frogmore, like that at Dreux, was meant both to house the mortal remains of the new dynasty's founder and to symbolise the altered character of the Monarchy.

It is not surprising that the sketches which the Queen drew for the

architects were based on the mausoleum built for Albert's father which the Prince himself had helped to design. Because of his love for Italy, he had wanted an Italian design based on the thirteenth century and Victoria did the same. What she had so liked about the Coburg structure was its cheerfulness: the stereotyped view we have of her as a grieving widow sunk in unrelieved grief and near to madness is a fiction based on court gossip.

The Queen's strong and straight-forward faith in the resurrection meant that she wanted the new structure to reflect God's glory which would swallow up her own grief. In a letter to her eldest daughter, written as the foundations were being dug at Frogmore, she said: 'Always pray for him [Albert], as before — never make any difference, I don't and won't, and treat him as living, only invisible to us — as he has reached the end of our journey'. The Mausoleum, therefore, would need to reflect this strong faith: it must be bright and affirmative. She saw it not as a 'Sterbe-Zimmer [death chamber] but as a living beautiful monument'. It must be a structure in which one could pray. It surprised some of her clerical advisers (as always wary of public criticism from extremist groups — in this case fanatical Protestants) that she wanted an Altar in the building and that she intended to use the Mausoleum as a chapel in which to hold services. Today, when one visits Frogmore, a sign reminds visitors that this remains a consecrated building.

Outside, the new structure was 80 feet long and 70 feet wide and built of British granite and Portland stone: many of the stones weigh over a ton and the walls are extremely thick. The structure outside looks octogan in shape but is actually a square cross with the intervening walls curved. The internal walls form an ambulatory marked off from the centre by four mammoth arches. In the centre is the sarcophagus with recumbent figures of the Queen and Prince. Above them is a splendid dome covered on the outside with Australian copper. The ambulatory gives the impression of greater space just as the dome gives that of greater height than there actually is.

The decorations chosen were copies of Raphael cartoons and paintings as he had always remained Prince Albert's favourite painter. There are, interspersed, biblical texts in English and, higher up, in German. The dome is lit by eight groups of windows and the ceiling is 70 feet above the floor. Painted angels, actually made of papier mache, decorate the ribs which divide the dome's ceiling: this was originally painted blue with gold stars but in 1909 it was redone to show angels bearing crowns and wreaths of immortelles against a background of clouds and stars. Throughout, especially on a sunlit afternoon, the building in its frescoes, marbles and mosaics is rich in colour, light and space.

The central feature remains, of course, the magnificent marble effigies of the Prince and Queen Victoria by the Italian sculptor, Baron Carlo Marochetti. His statue of Richard the Lionheart, now outside the Palace of Westminster, was described by Ruskin in the second of his 'Art of England' lectures as 'the only really interesting piece of historical sculpture

we have hitherto given to our City populace'. He based his effigy of Prince Albert on a design sent by their eldest daughter, the Princess Royal. The figures rest, with each head inclined towards the other, on the sarcophagus, itself reported to be the largest block of perfect granite in the world. It was only on the fourth attempt that a perfect block, quarried from the Cairngall quarry in Scotland, was produced. It is set on black Belgian marble donated by Victoria's Uncle Leopold, the first King of the Belgians. Above the sarcophagus hang Albert's heraldic achievements, to which were added in time, those of the Queen. The walls and floors are covered with a splendid array of marbles from round the world, all set into a Portuguese marble called Emperor's Red, given by King Luiz I, a cousin of both Albert and Victoria.

All this magnificence lay in the future when the Royal Family gathered on a wet December day in 1862 in the unfinished building as Bishop Samuel Wilberforce of Oxford conducted the consecration service. Afterwards he wrote to his brother-in-law from Windsor Castle in a letter now among his papers in the Bodleian Library, Oxford:

> My dearest Anderson, I am just home from the Consecration of the Mausoleum, one of the most touching scenes I ever saw to see our Queen & the file of Fatherless Children walk in & kneel down in those solemn prayers. Secret, I had a half-hour's talk with her yesterday & nothing could be more delightful. So gentle so affectionate so true so real. No touch of morbidness. Quite cheerful — & so kind ... A sister could not have been more tender.

Over the porch entrance is a terracotta medallion of the head of Christ designed and executed by the Princess Royal, Victoria's eldest daughter and, for a tragically short time, Empress of Germany. It had been a gift to Prince Albert before his death and was put over the entrance as a statement of faith. Inside the porch, over the door, is this inscription: 'Alberti principis quod mortale erat hoc in sepulcro deponi volvit vidua moerens Victoria Regina A.D. MDCCCLXII. Vale desideratissime! Hic demum conquiescam tecum tecum in Christo consurgam'. 'To Prince Albert whose mortal remains were deposited in this sepulchre by his grieving widow, Queen Victoria in the Year of Our Lord 1862. Farewell thou for whom I most yearn. Here at last with thee shall I find rest; with thee shall I rise in Christ'. It remains one of the most touching, personal and romantic of inscriptions and is also one of those most ignored by visitors.

The Queen, who retained the key to the Mausoleum, constantly visited the building, often simply to be alone and occasionally to show it to special guests; when at Windsor she worked in the gardens nearby as does the present Queen, Victoria's great-great grandaughter. Throughout Victoria's lifetime and into the reign of her son, Edward VII, members of the Royal Family gathered for a special service each year on 14 December, the date of Prince Albert's death. In the decades following completion of the work in 1871 Victoria added memorials to those she loved: to her three children and two sons-in-law who died before her and

to her 'faithful Highland servant', John Brown. Her memorial tablet to Brown was not one of those mementoes of the hated Brown removed by her son, King Edward VII, when he came to the Throne. However, by being set low down on a wall in the ambulatory it is difficult to read. In the present century graves of members of the Royal Family, including the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, now surround the Mausoleum to the right as one enters the building. The present Queen has given orders that she and Prince Philip are to be buried along with her father, King George VI, under the new chapel built to his memory in the north side of the nave of St George's Chapel.

It was in 1901 that the Mausoleum was once again the focus of national attention when the Queen's remains were removed there. The occasion was not without incident as Bishop Randall Davidson, one of her few clerical friends and later Archbishop of Canterbury, noted in a private memorandum among his papers at Lambeth Palace. The funeral service at St George's Windsor had itself been fraught with problems. It is well known how the horses bolted at the station and the gun-carriage carrying the Queen's coffin was then pulled by naval ratings. But inside the chapel the Lord Chamberlain had forgotten, when issuing tickets, that those in the procession could not come into the Chapel. As a result there were so few people inside that ushers moved them about to make it look less empty.

The greatest difficulties arose when it came to the actual internment. Lord Esher had recorded in his diary that no one could find Marochetti's statue of the Queen. Only after much frantic searching did one old workman remember a marble statue walled up in the castle. The wall was taken down and the forgotten effigy removed to Frogmore. Another problem soon arose: Queen Victoria was very short — not much if any above five feet. Her coffin was remarkably small as a result. But this coffin was placed inside another, lead, coffin which Bishop Davidson noted was 'needlessly huge', at least one-third bigger than Albert's.

When the sarcophagus was opened workmen discovered that the lead coffin would not fit inside. The only solution lay in hacking away several inches of the perfect granite which, forty years before, had caused so much trouble to find and cut. Luckily the King was not told of this and the damage was not visible.

Inside the sarcophagus it was found that Prince Albert's coffin was covered, in accordance with royal tradition, with a velvet pall. Victoria, however, had ordered in her will that her coffin should not be covered. Inside it the smaller, wooden one was of plain elm, exactly like those, noted Davidson ironically, 'which disfigure the Royal Vault' which the Queen had always hated. What neither he nor the King knew was that inside the inner coffin and hidden from view lay a host of momentoes which Victoria had secretly ordered placed there, reminders of those she had loved.

In 1919 her great-grandson, Prince Henry, later the Duke of Gloucester, told Lady Diana Cooper a story of one of the religious services held in

the Mausoleum after the Queen's death. As the Royal Family knelt round the sarcophagus a dove which had got into the building circled above them. 'Dear Mama's spirit... we are sure of it' everyone said. Princess Louise, the Queen's most artistic, temperamental and difficult daughter, said 'No, I am sure it is not so'. The others insisted, 'It must be dear Mama's spirit'. 'No,' she replied, looking at her youngest sister, Princess Beatrice, 'Mama's spirit would never have ruined Beatrice's hat'.

The Royal Mausoleum and surrounding gardens, which include Queen Victoria's mother's mausoleum and the royal graves, are open this year on 6 and 7 May. The Royal Mausoleum by itself is open on 20 May. The gardens alone are open on 27 May. For further information contact the Windsor Tourist Information Office on (0753) 852010.

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[Dr. James Munson is co-author of a biography of Queen Victoria, *Victoria Portrait of a Queen*, published by BBC Books.]

# A MEMORY OF AUSTRALIA'S TRAGIC POET

## by Richard Pennington

EVEN today, I imagine, the name of Christopher Brennan the Australian poet and Greek scholar, is little known. In 1930 it was wholly unknown, for when I sent a short study of his work to J. C. Squire, the editor of the *London Mercury*, he asked me to call, said the article was good, but added, 'You can't fool an old hand like me. I've been in the game too long'. I could not understand; and he still thought I was bluffing. 'It's good; but you've made two slips. Look at these lines beginning with lowercase at this date, 1895 of all years, and in Australia of all places. You can't get away with that'. 'And what', I asked 'was the other mistake?' 'Oh, the Mallarmé. His influence is obvious; and at that date it's impossible'. He really thought Brennan was a figment of my imagination.

His incredulity was understandable; for nothing of Brennan's poetry had yet reached England; nor did the British Museum possess either of his two publications, the *XXI poems* of 1897 and the *Poems* of 1913; and the man himself had disappeared into a city slum and social ostracism. From which I had the good fortune to rescue him.

It all began one week-end in the house of Francis Crosslé the doctor at Bulli, then (1926) a village of wooden houses sixty miles from Sydney, beside the long, unbroken sandy beach that stretches for miles as far as Illawarra. Crosslé was a highly cultivated man of literary tastes, and he would invite young artists or writers for the week-end at Bulli, and there I would go when not at sea. Crosslé — he insisted on the accent, and his bookplate carried what he considered his armorial bearings — had done his medical studies in Dublin and there had consorted with the writers of the Celtic 'renaissance' of those days: Yeats and A.E. and George Moore. On his bookshelves were the Irish legends, the Irish poets, and the Abbey Theatre booklets. And then, apparently, he had left Dublin for New South Wales. 'We made a runaway marriage' his wife explained to me one day 'and came to Australia'. Run away, they certainly had; but, as I learned much later, had forgotten the marriage in their impetuosity.

Crosslé had become a very popular doctor, a friend of Beutler the composer, and of Norman Lindsay the artist — he had written an introduction to a collection of Lindsay's etchings — who wrote him long letters full of his peculiar and personal and preposterous philosophy. A short, slender man with a pale, intellectual face and corn-coloured hair and an air of impalpability, as though a strong wind could blow him away. It was only his very light blue eyes that were disconcerting.

It was one very warm evening when, after dinner — it may have been the heat or from querulousness at Crosslé's praise of McCrae and Atkinson as poets of importance — I made a discourteous remark about the Aussie Muse. Crosslé rose; looked along the shelves; and brought out

a slim, brown-paper covered pamphlet labelled *XXI poems: towards the source*, by Christopher Brennan. 'You can't say anything about Australian verse without taking that into consideration. Read it, and let me know what you think of it.'

In bed that night I read through *XXI poems*, and did not know what to think of it at all, except that these extraordinary poems were either spurious or else incontestably the finest verse that had appeared anywhere in the outer Empire since that Empire had begun sprawling over a quarter of the globe's surface, to the greater glory of Threadneedle Street but not to the enrichment of art. The tumbled images and impetuous metre carried one away until one seemed far from Port Jackson and somewhere between the Brocken on Walpurgisnacht and Provence on a Spring morning.

> But now I am come among the rougher hills
> and grow aware of the sea that somewhere near
> is restless; and the flood of night is thinned
> and stars are whitening. O, what horrible dawn
> will bare me the way and crude lumps of the hills
> and the homeless concave of the day, and bare
> the ever-restless, ever complaining sea?

or

> I would this old illusion of the Spring
> might perish once with all her airs that fawn
> and traitor roses of the wooing dawn:
> for none hath known the magic dream of old
> come sooth, since that first surge of light outrolled
> heroic, broke the august and mother sleep
> and foamed, and azure was the rearward deep
> and Eden afloat among her virgin boughs...

Heaven knows what the Aussies made of this in 1897. For in England the tradition of Tennyson and Swinburne still reigned, and poetry under the Southern Cross was expected to be bush-wacking balladry or serenades in tropical groves. But in this paper-covered pamphlet was an English Symbolist flourishing (impossible thought) under Queen Victoria.

What had become of the poet? I asked friends in Sydney, and they did not know. One of them, at the mention of the name, had a vague memory of some scandal. That was all. Christopher Brennan had vanished from the social life of Sydney, or from the world.

At the end of 1926 I found him in the back room of a very dingy lodging house near the Woolloomooloo docks. At the address I was given a woman was washing clothes in a ground floor room, and when I inquired for Brennan she pointed to the floor above. I went up the dark stairs and found the door open and the room empty, and went down again to ask where he might be? 'Probably having breakfast in the "Prince Albert". He'll be back if you wait'. It didn't sound like the name of a restaurant. I went upstairs again and spent half an hour taking in the melancholy of this bare, white-washed room that looked on to the brick walls and

washing of a backyard. There was a cane chair, a bed, a narrow strip of worn carpet, and that was all, except that on a shelf were ranged, incongruously in this dock-side dead-end, the volumes of Grenfell & Hunt's edition of the Oxhyrinchus papyri and some Greek texts annotated, I found, in a neat handwriting based on the Italian script of the Renaissance.

At half-past-ten there were slow, heavy steps on the stairs, and the poet came in, a little unsteadily. He was a tall, magnificently built figure, collarless, with a greasy and stained coat buttoned imperfectly over a massive chest, unshaven, and with eyes that were red, though not, I thought, from lack of sleep. But he managed, with the ease of the educated man, the sudden transition from solitary drinker to polite host. He apologised for not being in to receive his visitor; proferred him the single chair; and sat down on the concave bed as though it were the usual divan, and moved with no awkwardness into the most natural of conversations that began with questions about my work and ended with Aeschylus and Pindar. I left at mid-day with the conviction that this first meeting with the Australian Symbolist in that dismal room heavy with the fumes of breakfast had been one of the most extraordinary experiences of my life. There was no doubt at all of Brennan's scholarship, and the legend of the brilliant conversationalist was also true, for I had listened enraptured for more than an hour and had realised that, after I do not know how many years of excessive drinking and exclusion from respectable society, this man could still have shone in any European gathering. I came away, too, with the determination to do something for genius while it was still alive rather than wait and buy an expensive wreath for the funeral.

Gradually I pieced together his history, or that version of it which public rumour had preserved, and I learned of the raw and brilliant youth who had shown such aptitude for Greek and Latin studies that he had been sent to Germany to study. The Irish Australian found himself in an ancient city where scholarship was venerated. He heard the language of Goethe all round. In the bookshops were the scholar's tools, and the consolation of beer in the cellars. And then down the stairs of his lodging came the flaxen-haired Gretchen, the landlady's daughter. Unfortunately, he married her and brought her to New South Wales and to inevitable disillusion.

He was expected back in 1894 to return with a doctorate; but he had neglected (mistakenly) to present himself for an examination he did not think important. So that for a time he was reduced to working in a public library. But he gave occasional lectures at the university on Greek and on modern languages, and was finally, in 1921, appointed Associate Professor of German and Comparative Literature. He also received a mark of public recognition when some Sydney citizens combined to publish a very handsome edition of his poems in 1913.

Unhappily, the marriage contracted by the young poet in the early 'nineties had not proved durable; and his domestic life became unbearable; for he took a mistress, which was natural and understandable. But he

made a mistake that is surprising for an intelligent man to have made in the Australia of the 'twenties, a country where Irish Catholics and English Nonconformists were numerous: he did not observe the rules. He set up house openly with his mistress. This was an affront to a well-ordered society. The university where he taught, was faced with a difficult decision: either to condone adultery or dismiss him. At this moment, fate, as they say, tragically intervened. Returning home very late one night (or leaving it: for there is a more than nocturnal obscurity here) his mistress was run down in the darkness by a tram and killed. The blow was too much for Brennan. He took to drinking heavily; neglected his professorial duties; and began to behave so erratically that the university no longer hesitated to dismiss him. He disappeared into the city slums.

At the time I knew little of the real history, but was moved by the spectacle of a man of extraordinary gifts, undoubtedly a great scholar, and, as I thought, a good poet, excluded from society. I protested to the University. I badgered the Vice-Chancellor. Eventually, he agreed that if I could assemble a few prominent citizens to consider Brennan's case, he would take the Chair at the meeting. After I had done this, we agreed that nothing public should be done, but that, as private individuals, we would subscribe, each one, a small amount each year to pay for a decent lodging, to buy him some clothes, and to guarantee him some solid food. None of which he had had for some time. One or two of the assembly thought he was too far gone in alcoholism to recover; but recover he did, very gradually. He took to his Greek studies again. He presented me with a translation of the *Ecclesiazusae*, beautifully written in his Italian script, which I did not long enjoy, for he soon asked for it back. Its value as an object of barter with a publican must have recurred to him, and it probably went the way of the Mallarmé letter (or letters) which he once confessed to me he had exchanged for two bottles of whisky.

Part of our therapeutic treatment was to invite him to dinner regularly at our homes; and on these occasions he would feel bound to be sober. Encouraged by the good company and the good wine (sparsely served) he would become the centre of conversation and the remarkable talker of former days. On subjects that interested me — and, alas!, only on these — I would note down that evening or the next day as much as possible of Brennan's talk, and these are now the only testimony to his fascinating conversation. Only rarely did the control he must have imposed upon himself give way, as when, one evening, probably given something stronger than the wine, he suddenly recited at full voice a long Sophoclean chorus. One of the company sent me down the table a visiting card hastily scribbled: For God's sake give Chris a beer. And there was one Saturday mid-day when I left my office, and coming into George Street, one of the main streets of the city, I found him lying at full length in the gutter, drunk and insensible. He was far too heavy a man to lift into a cab, and none of the passers-by would lend me a hand, so that all I could do was to drag him on to the pavement and prop him against the wall. I picked up his hat and put it on his head, and so left him. Time and death, it

seems, have transmuted the fumes of alcohol to the odour of sanctity, and the shapeless hat I replaced on the tousled head looks rather like a crown of laurel now.

For Christopher Brennan has become the subject of a very scholarly, very good, biography, by Axel Clark, published by an Australian university press, and his poetry has been reprinted, some of it in luxurious limited editions. It will probably be as little read as it was in his lifetime. He is more likely to fade into a legend and be remembered as a character in Australian literary history, the romantic tragic failure.

## POEM

### EXCURSION

Instead of 'wet day'
I typed 'west day';
Do the days have directions?
Where is today going?
Unaware, are we sliding off
Into strange corners of existence
With unknown compass-points?
But the weeks go in crazy spirals anyway,
Leading us to nowhere in particular
Since nothing is important.

Elizabeth Hillman

# HOW TO GET AWAY FROM IT — ALL! THE TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTH CYPRUS

## by S. Gorley Putt

TO readers of newspapers and listeners to TV and radio bulletins, 1991 was hardly a year full of comfort and joy. It occurred to me by the end of the year that a full dose of Yulery foolery and New Year glad memories would be insupportable. My Xmas present to kind friends would be my temporary absence. One needed to forget, not remember; to disburden, not embrace anything new; to substitute for frolicsome celebrations a stern course of self-abatement. Where on earth could one find a place where nothing reminds one of anything? Where instead of gathering new impressions one is free to shed old ones? Where one's mental and emotional burdens could be lightened? Where one could enjoy for a spell the positive aspects of Coleridge's 'I see, not feel...'?

Out of the blue, the problem was solved. A travel brochure offered a fortnight swamping Xmas and New Year, in the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus. There, if anywhere, one could even forget oneself. The Turkish language, although written in our own script, is to a Western reader much like picking up a set of unlucky Scrabble-tiles. As for 'the world forgetting, by the world forgot,' the world has nothing to forget, since (with the sole exception of Turkey itself) it does not officially recognize the existence of this little republic — which is why all visitors must first fly to mainland Turkey which alone gives clearance for flights to the TRNC airport of Ercan. Even before arriving in Never-never-land, visitors from the West endure the illogical experience of flying back, so to say, over their own sky-tracks.

In this officially non-existent slice of Turkey, all schoolday notions of Ottoman arrogance melt away. Markedly un-terrible teenage Young Turk conscripts are Boy Scouts who wave cheerily at rare busloads of foreign visitors, their young brows unlined by any trace of consecutive thought. Self-absorbed modesty, honesty, endless patience reign hand in hand here, with an elaborate inefficiency which is itself disarming. All these splendid anomalies we could discover within minutes after being bumpily but skilfully driven to our package-deal hotel.

The pre-1974 pre-TRNC Deniz Kizi Hotel is perched over the roadside hamlet of Alsancak, a few miles west of Kyrenia — itself re-named Girne by the Turks. Nature — plus, presumably, the original Greek Cypriot proprietors — had done it proud. It commands superb views over one of the most sensational coastlines of Europe, with its own private beach hidden under stupendous mountains to which cling such ageless adherences and indentations as Saint Hilarion's Castle, the Tomb of Saint Barnabas, Othello's Tower, and tiny villages dotted among the crags and pine forests of the Five Fingers range, from which one can catch glimpses of the south-coast sea across the whole eastern tip of the island.

But if the hotel itself suggested an earlier Greek effort of Swissification,

its present staff whether male or female, young or old, would glide noiselessly and quite slowly to and fro, quietly replacing with a gleaming new ashtray one which had held two matchsticks, or emerging from a distant kitchen first with a cup and saucer, then a pot of hot coffee, and after a third glide into and back again from the far-off invisible source, a small jug of cream to finish the rite. This was the kind of 'elaborate inefficiency' which during two weeks in Never-never-land replaced all one's usual expectations of the ostentatiously professional (and repeatedly tippable) business of 'looking after the tourists'. Looking straight ahead of themselves on these dignified missions, they just happened to be passing the right place at the right time. Carry a tray to cut down by some miles a day those endless one-thing-at-a-time silent journeys? It had never occurred to them. Invisible blinkers guided them on their wholly personal effortless movements. It was not public 'politeness'. Not moving their calm handsome heads an inch to right or left, they seemed to be exclusively intent upon their own routine affairs. Without a flicker of animosity, they behaved as if other people simply did not exist.

By the very nature of human personality we are all automatically egocentric. Indeed, not to be so is to become, physically and psychologically, 'beside oneself'. But normal egocentricity does not imply egotism, and the self-centredness I was watching was so innocent as to be curiously praiseworthy. It was something positive. Nor was it the result of our lack of knowledge of the Turkish language. Their own knowledge of English could range from fluency among those old enough to remember Cyprus as a British colony to a few hesitant sentences from youngsters most of whom had left school early. It was therefore not surprising that TRNC citizens, whether met in the sizeable towns Kyrenia and Famagusta, or in shops or on local buses, did not seem aware of us. What did surprise me was that because of their quiet patience they seemed equally uninterested in formal contact with their own countrymen.

One cold day I was waiting for a bus alongside three neat youngsters, all of whom had indicated that yes, they too were waiting to go to Alsancak by 'my' bus. A passing motor-cyclist slowed down: one of the three friends hopped onto the pillion-seat without a word to, or glance at, his companions: nothing to do with them, was it? A moment later the second youth, again without a word or gesture of farewell to his remaining friend, was swept into the back seat of a new companion's car. No word, no wave: the third chap had suddenly ceased to exist, had become as much a non-person as the unknown Englishman. I felt that if E. M. Forster had lived among the Turks of Cyprus, his benediction to the world would have been: 'Only disconnect!'.

I was delighted to discover, from Vivien Noakes' biography, that Edward Lear reported during his travels among Turks in 1848: '... they never stare or wonder at anything; you are not bored by any questions, and I am satisfied that if you chose to take your tea while suspended by your feet from the ceiling, not a word would be said, or a sign of amazement betrayed.'

It was not my business to enquire too closely into the strictly political basis for some of these observations. Poverty and unemployment may well have contributed to the strange fatalism. The local barren soil and a usually blistering climate may have preserved the scenic beauty from the effects of a flourishing agriculture. Did a high proportion of the present population come from mainland Turkey after the 1974 invasion and resettlement? If so, the apparently placid indifference of the strolling young Turkish conscripts might have been little different from that of non-Cypriot settlers. Whatever the cause, this mood suited perfectly my brief spell of non-festive unsociability.

One over-riding 'political' benefit was obvious to all of us Western visitors: by day or night, on country roads or in towns, we all felt absolutely safe. There seemed to be nothing whatever for the UN blue-capped 'peace-keepers' to do, as they wandered forlornly in twos and threes, their own native languages adding a touch of universality to the prevailing atmosphere of inactivity and incomprehension. No prison problems — because no crime! No knifing, no mugging! Nowhere in England, in recent years, have I felt so immune from violence as in TRNC. Nor so little suspicious of peculation. We Western visitors quickly learnt that there was never a need to count our change. These Cypriot Turks are far too proud to cheat.

One aspect of this rigorous non-commercial uprightness became positively comic for us visitors: we all found it difficult to buy anything! Remembering my own visit to Kyrenia one week before the 1974 invasion, I sped along its still fine promenade and High Street, looking for what had then been its displays of Greek-operated retail trade. A sort of blight had fallen. Only a few bare necessities rewarded the window-shopper. Congratulating myself at having laboriously tracked down an almost hidden leather-goods shop, I tried against the owner's reluctance to buy a pair of shoes. Two pairs were produced: one was sadly the wrong size, the other fitted but was less attractive. From all the shelves of shoe-boxes surrounding him, could he not find the right style in the right size? His 'No' was hardly more than a shrug. He beamed with real cordiality as I left him without having sullied his hands with the indignity of salesmanship.

It happened that our Xmas/New Year fortnight coincided with an unusual spell of howling wind and driving rain, rain by the bucketful. In Greek Kyrenia no doubt every available umbrella would have been dangled in the front windows. In Turkish Girne the English visitors (having mostly thought that they had left rain behind them at home) went roaming on a hunt-the-brolly game with small hope of winning. I was lucky. I found a folding mini-brolly hiding away in the rearmost regions of a chandler's shop. Price? £4.50. Shaking his head, the owner apologized for not being able to sell me a cheaper model. 'This one is fine. Is it made here?' He nodded. Back at the hotel, a ceremonial unfurling of my handsome bargain brolly brought disillusion from one of my package-mates: 'It works beautifully; it was imported from Taiwan.' My personal hope,

that the non-existent Republic could find its way in the world, shrank with my re-folded brolly. But for any illuminating disquisition on the topic of intercontinental trade in umbrellas between the TRNC and Taiwan, I fear I must direct the reader to confront his friendly neighbourhood Economist.

The rationale of my two-week experiment in winding down, personally and socially, in a non-stimulating environment was confirmed when the 'return to normal' went well. Not one English newspaper had been available; the radio and TV had produced only local news. So on the return coach from Heathrow the newspapers were gulped down with a conscious appetite. Although in public affairs the attempt to decide whether Mr. Major or Mr. Kinnock were the bigger humbug had not changed, the crosswords were crisper, and the sardonic intelligence of one's favourite commentators could still add savour to an otherwise unappetising menu. Return to familiar faces, familiar furniture, familiar buildings, is always reassuring after a brief absence. Returning to them from almost nowhere and almost nobody has added to that reassurance a sharp extra zest. Best of all, my friends have been re-discovered — a step up, surely, from being taken for granted?

For this relief, self-absorbed and dignified TRNC, much thanks!

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[S. Gorley Putt is a Fellow and former Senior Tutor of Christ's College, Cambridge. His memoir *Wings of a Man's Life* (Claridge Press) records how from a seafaring ancestry (*Men Dressed As Seamen*) he became a literary historian, his latest work in this field being *A Preface to Henry James* (Longman).]

# Literary Supplement

## WORKING FOR THE PRESIDENT

*Counsel to the President, a Memoir.* Clark Clifford with R. Holbrooke. Random House, New York. 709pp.

Clark Clifford is the real White House veteran, liked and trusted by some. Others feel he is too tough and resourceful. He came to Washington when Truman became President as a young lawyer from St. Louis, Missouri, Truman's state. A good acquaintance of his was a friend of the new President who made him his Naval Aide, and he, Vandarman, picked Clifford as his Deputy. Both were non-sailing Naval Officers and when Vandarman had to join Truman at that place neither of them had ever heard of Potsdam. Clifford took his place. That was the start.

As a sharp-minded, hard working lawyer he moved gradually closer to President Truman as an adviser who could be relied on. He became official Counsellor to Truman and was in on almost everything. He became a speech writer too, and speech writers are now policy makers. He gives straight, often verbal accounts of what went on at the meetings he attended advising the President, for instance when Truman, defying the fierce resistance of his Cabinet and officials, recognized Israel. He was also the adviser who submitted the key proposals that became the Marshall Plan revealing that Truman called it the Marshall Plan although Clifford urged him to call it the Truman Plan. But Truman argued that the Republicans would vote for it if it did not carry his own name.

He also reveals that Churchill was Truman's hero and that they played Poker on the train that took them to Fulton for the famous Iron Curtain speech. Truman organized his Poker team, Clifford included, to produce a good show. Clifford did the writing for the Truman Doctrine as well and laid out the main outlines of what he calls Point Four, the aid the US gave from then on to friendly and neutral countries in trouble to stop Soviet expansion. He and others had to work skilfully for Truman quite liked Stalin after the Potsdam meeting. The Korean War made all the difference and Truman did not hesitate to dismiss General McArthur. Clifford makes a point of showing that Truman did not brood over the Hiroshima bomb although he had not been told of its existence until literally twenty minutes after he had become President. It is curious that Clifford did not dwell on Attlee's dramatic visit to the White House to stop Truman from using the bomb against Korea.

As a good White — Anglo Saxon — Protestant Liberal Clifford excels in his reaction to Truman's 1948 election campaign that he was not expected to win. But, getting tired of the enormous tensions his work created, he left before the end of Truman's Presidency but reports that he was the man who urged Truman not to run in 1952.

He became a Washington lawyer and adviser watching everything. He became John F. Kennedy's lawyer and Kennedy asked him to work out a 'Transition Paper' setting out what he thought best Kennedy should start with at the White House. Every following President has done the same, Clifford says. Lyndon Johnson sought his advice all the time and made him Defense Secretary when the Vietnam war began to go very wrong. Clifford gives a detailed, passionate account of the Vietnam debacle. He was involved in all the details but claims that from the start he had had his doubts about the whole venture. Again, he persuaded Johnson not to stand in 1968 as he had Truman. Johnson,

he discloses, would have made him Secretary of State, the post he always wanted, and yet he persuaded the troubled President, who felt that Vietnam was a grievous personal defeat for him, not to stand. Clifford emerges as a hot-blooded realist.

He served on various Committees under Republican Presidents and also advised Carter. But the Vietnam War, the defeat of the US remains his great trauma as it does for most Americans and he goes into dramatic details about the mistakes and errors of judgement made by the people, civilian and military, who were in charge. He was sent to Vietnam and to Paris during the fatal negotiations to report back. He was present, he said, when Eisenhower at the usual take-over meeting, made an overwhelmed Kennedy start the real American military intervention in Laos and Vietnam that led to everything. He is scathing about the South Vietnam leaders who sabotaged a compromise with Hanoi. It had been possible at the last moment.

Clifford, on the scene for so long, gives a personal appreciation of the Presidents, Democrat and Republican. For him Truman and Johnson are the leaders who tried courageously to carry out a policy of economic and social reform. Kennedy had the instinct of leadership but was a pragmatist and not really a New Dealer and true Liberal. Carter, of good intentions, failed to act as the representative of those sections of the people who had elected him. A President must be the leader of the nation and not just a manager of the Executive. As for the Republicans, Eisenhower, he says, only acted when it became obviously necessary. As for Nixon, he regards him as the man who achieved stability in the Middle East, established relations with China and stabilized relations with the Soviet Union. But he does not really like him.

In a curious way Clifford appreciates Reagan as the President with the right instinct for leadership. About Bush he is doubtful.

Having been in, on the Democrat side, on all election campaigns since 1948 Clifford's observations are useful. He ends his memoirs with reflections. He is scathingly critical of the present situation in the US, charging Washington with ignoring throughout the Eighties 'the environmental crisis, the budgetary disaster, the decay of our nation's infrastructure, the drug problem, AIDS, the decline in our educational system, the deficiencies in health care, our lack of competitiveness overseas, and the most enduring of all our social problems, the continuing racial crisis in America'. He also warns that the US must drop its 'obsession' with being Number One in the world which really belongs to the Sport Pages. One is, inevitably, reminded of President Bush who is claiming constantly that the US is that Number One and will and must remain so. Again, in his account of the Vietnam troubles, Clifford reveals that President Johnson in his election consideration felt strongly that a President must be able to claim a political or diplomatic triumph at the end of his term.

The Clifford memoirs show that power in the White House is always on balance between the President's personal advisers, the Cabinet itself and Congress. A President, he warns, should get a third opinion from selected and experienced people he trusts. He would take too many risks by only relying on his staff and the federal bureaucracy. More than any other factor, he insists, Senior Personnel determines the course and character of an administration. Selections were often made without sufficient care.

Clifford does not even hint at the personal goings on and actions of Presidents and their staffs despite his intimate contacts. His memoirs make interesting reading in an election year.

LEO MURAY

## RE-BORN AND RE-UNITED

*Germany in the Twentieth Century.* David Childs. Batsford. £25.00.

David Childs, Professor of German Politics at Nottingham University, has given a new title to the third edition of what was formerly *Germany since 1918.* More than that: he has added a chapter recounting the merger of East and West, appended a useful and unusual statistical section, and provided a collection of very brief 'Who's Whos' — 152 in number, for easy reference. And by writing in a straightforward, even flat, style, and by avoiding footnotes, scholarly apparatus, German quotations, and all jargon, he lets the events unfold naturally. The Weimar Republic, the Nazi era, the Communist tyranny of Eastern Germany since 1945 become — almost — a normal part of a nation's history, arising from what went before. What emerges is a workmanlike political handbook, all but devoid of emotion.

It is, however, more than that. For the drama is in the story itself: of violence and defeat twice over, of partition and Four-Power Occupation, of the efforts of two states to overcome disunity — and of new threats and new challenges. There is sunshine amid the many storms. The Germany of these pages — the Kaiser's and Hitler's country, Walter Ulbricht's and Erich Honecker's country too — was also the seed-bed of the Welfare State, even if it was a state always more paternalist and planned than liberal and spontaneous. It bred technocratic Universities that were totally distinct from and in many ways superior to Oxford and Cambridge; the new American Universities of the late nineteenth century and their graduate schools were modelled on Germany, not on Britain, and to their advantage. Germany was Right-wing, not democratic, its industry State-supported, its Left always close to Marxist Communism and fuelled from the East.

History has inevitably overtaken Professor Childs. There is too little here (only one paragraph in his last chapter) on Germany's continuing fear of those who lived beyond its eastern mark, whatever their labels: whether Poles, Magyars, 'gypsies', Jews, Turks or 'guest-workers'; it re-absorbs its own folk, as did Hitler; but it has been and will be less welcoming of the many would-be incomers who are not ethnic Germans than are — until now, apparently — some of its fellow-members in the EC. Again, we could have benefited from more on industrial conditions in North-Rhine Westphalia, where the 'British disease' now seems epidemic. We do not have explained here why the formerly much-praised economy of the GDR (praised in earlier editions and other books by Professor Childs) is now revealed as inefficient, labour-intensive and corrupt. But the perspective here is welcome. We tend to see Europe as dominated (threatened?) by Germany (whether West, or re-united). We may be right. But Germans West and East have other views: Childs quotes from a poll in the *Süd-deutsche Zeitung*: 40% of them see Switzerland as the model, 29% admire Sweden, only 2% would choose Britain. It is salutary to be reminded of the view from Munich, and points East.

ESMOND WRIGHT

## BATTLE LINES

*One Hundred Days: The Memoirs of the Falklands Battle Group Commander.* Sandy Woodward with Patrick Robinson. Harper Collins. 360pp. £18.00.

How much the success of this book is due to the professional writer's skill of Patrick Robinson, one does not know; suffice to say the character of Sandy Woodward flames through. A Cornishman with just the right Celtic admix of toughness, sensitivity, intelligence and awkwardness, he was the right man to

fight an impossible war. His earlier service as commander of a nuclear submarine, taking split second decisions, inside a highly technical tin gave him nerve and stamina to survive events where he sometimes seemed to be hampered more by his 'friends' than enemies; in particular the media which only an acute sense of humour countered. The press, he observed, 'did not see itself on our side' but only looked for truth. As the Argentines admitted later, ninety per cent of their intelligence came from the British Overseas Service. Churchill would have had a different word for this 'leaking for truth' which blew the amphibian landing cover. Lt.-Colonel Jones of 2 Para threatened to sue the BBC for manslaughter, but was himself killed in an Argentinian ambush, for which some blamed BBC information.

The Argentinian invasion of the Falklands took place on April 2nd, 1982. The question of war lingered. The experts (MOD, Army, RAF, John Nott) were against it. The US army said recapture was impossible. Mrs. Thatcher, Admiral Leach and probably the majority of the British wanted Argentine aggression out. They said we couldn't do it so we did. With the loss of seven ships and 250 men out of 25,000 men and 100 ships in six weeks we succeeded.

Our operations, over 8,000 miles away from home, had to be completed before winter set in; we had very little time margin and time was on the Argentine side. In a welter of mixed orders from above Admiral Woodward had to deploy his forces against ship, soldier, airplane, submarine and exocet missile. There was some impossible weather: fog and gale; there were whales which sounded like submarines on sonar systems; he did not know where mines were laid and had no mine sweepers; he came within minutes of shooting down a Brazilian liner which strayed into an enemy plane's path. Instructions on TEZ (Total Exclusion Zone) and ROE (Rules of Engagement) sometimes seemed so confusing, he was fighting with both arms tied and needed a Nelson with two blind eyes. In the middle of this, on May 2nd, there was the Belgrano, an ex-American cruiser with bigger guns than anything the navy had, wavering along the TEZ. Woodward puts a convincing case for her sinking. Like Hiroshima, many lives were saved, for the Argentine fleet went home and never came back to battle.

This book is rivetting reading, whether among Woodward's wry comments or the blow by blow account of naval activities where the margin for error and defeat was close and General Winter arrived on the eve of surrender. Even with hindsight, the navy did a magnificent job.

Sandy Woodward did not expect a hero's welcome home and he was not disappointed. Roman generals in their triumphal marches kept a half naked slave by them as an intimation of mortality. Sandy's first intimation was a letter from the naval pension board pointing out that he had spent £3.85 on entertainment in the last quarter. This was being reduced and backdated. He therefore owed the Board £649.70 and would he pay it in full. He did not need a slave to whisper 'Hominem te memento'. He had the Civil Service.

MOLLY MORTIMER

## ARCHITECT OF THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION

*The Swordbearer: John Knox and the European Reformation.* Stewart Lamont. Hodder & Stoughton. £7.99.

John Knox, disciple of Calvin and architect of the Scottish Reformation, can be revered or reviled. Even this book's blurbist calls him 'the notorious Scottish Reformer', although to its author he is prophet, patriarch, and 'the Ezekiel of Scotland'. Knox cannot be ignored, but he can only too easily be

caricatured, and has often attracted contumely or credit which really belongs to others, praised as well as blamed for the wrong reasons.

It is probably impossible even now to write a neutral biography of such a man, but this biography by Stewart Lamont (a minister of the Kirk most of whose previous career has been in broadcasting and writing) attempts both to strike a balance and to describe the Knox of history, not of later legend.

The Knox who stands out remains an outspoken, abrasive character without the towering intellect or profundity of Calvin but with more humanity and complexity than he is often allowed. The book's title comes from Knox's brief role as 'swordbearer' or bodyguard to the earlier Scots reformer George Wishart, who before his betrayal and martyrdom dismissed Knox with the words: 'One is sufficient for a sacrifice'. Mr. Lamont argues that Knox's power in print and pulpit created another 'two-handed sword', to be wielded even against those set in authority and used to create a godly commonwealth.

Probably the three most widely held misconceptions about Knox which this biography finds it easiest to dispel are that he was the creator of Scots Presbyterianism, a fanatical misogynist, and an early prototype for Scottish nationalists. In fact Knox was more emphatically Protestant than Presbyterian, turning down the bishopric of Rochester not because he thought episcopacy unscriptural but because he rightly suspected the Protector Northumberland's intentions; and it was after his death that another Scot of very European outlook, Andrew Melville, gave the Kirk a real Presbyterian framework. Contemporary critics were inclined to attack Knox as too anglophile and anglicised — his Scots speech had been modified in exile — and some, perhaps envious celibates, thought him too fond of women. A post-Freudian age may also find as much fascination in his closeness to his pious and formidable English mother-in-law as the Victorians did in his disputations with Mary Queen of Scots.

Stewart Lamont is livelier on the women of the time than on its politics, though some of his enthusiasm for Knox stems from a belief that Knox's resistance to royal authority was two centuries ahead of its time, as his views on the education of the 'godly commonwealth' certainly were. But all sixteenth-century political theory seems ponderous today, with or without the attempt to give it a biblical foundation.

The book's admiration for Knox as political theologian has to go with a frank and well handled admission of the political disaster which, in a much misunderstood way, has distorted the reformer's subsequent reputation. He made the mistake, not unknown among contemporary political theologians, of selecting bits of the Bible and pursuing theological notions which were expedient for his immediate political priorities. Hence the blast of the trumpet against the 'monstrous regiment of women' — directed against the rule of Bloody Mary, who would surely have had him burned had he taken Rochester. It was apt enough for Knox's quarrels with the other Maries of Guise and Scotland, but a monstrous encumbrance once Elizabeth came to the English throne. She was not amused. Nevertheless the common interest of the Scots reformers and the English Crown ensured that the two countries moved closer, even though the Protestant settlements took different forms.

One question which Mr. Lamont raises but does not fully explore is Knox's mixture of linguistic and literary skills. We can only guess what he sounded like, especially when he reverted to a more Scottish emphasis after being criticised for too 'southron' a speech. But his history of the Scots Reformation is as notable for its prose as its polemic, and not only in the often-quoted

account of how, as a French galley-slave, he saw the spires and steeples of St. Andrews again and mustered the strength and will to survive, and to return. He did, and to some purpose. His own great book shows the strengths and weaknesses he brought with him.

R. D. KERNOHAN

## CHARLES BURNEY AS A MAN OF LETTERS

*The Letters of Charles Burney: Volume I: 1751-1784.* Ed. Alvaro Ribeiro. Oxford University Press. xxiv+501pp. £60.

Charles Burney's *History of Music* was a great achievement. When it was written, over 200 years ago, there was no discipline of musicology, no guide to libraries and few adequately catalogued libraries. The writer was not even one of the wealthy dilettanti who wandered over Europe with access to almost anywhere. He was an obscure provincial who came to London to be apprenticed to Thomas Arne, an eminent musician. By chance, in a harpsichord maker's shop, he met Fulke Greville, who redeemed him from the remaining three years of his apprenticeship and introduced him to high society. He became a highly successful music teacher. He wrote music for the theatre and other purposes, but as he approached 40 he realised that he would never be outstanding as a composer, and having literary interests — he often wrote light verse to his family and friends — he decided to concentrate on writing about music. His teaching brought him into contact with people of consequence, and he came to be accepted in literary circles. Always anxious to extend his musical experience, during his early years as a church organist he scored works by Tallis, Byrd, Marenzio and Palestrina. Later came an ambition to write a history of music, which he thought was badly needed by general readers, 'for the jargon, pedantry, and inanity of musical writers, cannot be matched in any other art.' (p.93).

He abounded with his contemporaries' fondness for correspondence, and his large family hoarded papers of all kinds. Four large volumes of his letters are promised, the present volume being the first. It starts with his early days of married life and ends with the death of Dr. Johnson and the marriage of Mrs. Thrale to a 'mere musician', events which broke up the chief literary circle to which he belonged. It shows how he cultivated many friendships and pursued an active social life. More importantly, it reveals how his history took shape.

His approach was to go to the countries where most of the development of European tradition had taken place, armed with introductions to people who could direct him to relevant material. This not only provided him with information about the past but also enabled him to observe the current state of the art, on which he reported in two publications about his tours in Italy and Germany.

He had a great gift for getting on with people of various kinds. He could differ from them and yet retain their goodwill. He told his French acquaintances quite frankly that he considered French vocal music, particularly its opera, old-fashioned. His great respect for Johnson did not prevent him from regretting the latter's prejudice against Gray and Prior. His amiability helped to ensure success for his history. Shortly after the appearance of the first instalment of it, another history of music was published by Sir John Hawkins. The reception of it was influenced by its author's personality, which was disliked by most people in London society, but also by his attitude to his subject. He believed 'Music was at its greatest perfection in Europe from about the middle of the

sixteenth to the beginning of the seventeenth century'. Burney, on the other hand, was no antiquarian; he was forward-looking and appreciated the new developments of his own time. He was one of the first movers for bringing Haydn to London. The greatest tribute he could pay to Purcell was to call him 'another Haydn'. Hawkins was academic, while Burney wanted to widen the musical experience of the general public. The conversational style of his letters to some extent transfers to his history. It is still very readable, not only as a monument to late eighteenth century taste but also because he remains an interesting companion.

BRUCE PATTISON

## THE MURDERER'S ALBATROSS

*William Roughead's 'Chronicles of Murder'*. Richard Whittington-Egan. Lochar Publishing. £17.99.

Richard Whittington-Egan's meticulous account of the life and work of William Roughead (1850 to 1952) shows its subject as a writer who in outlook, character and gifts was conditioned by lifelong residence and a substantial legal practice in his native city of Edinburgh. His passion for the true chronicling of murder was equalled only by his love of the Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists whose poetry of violence is unparalleled in literature. The murder cases tried in Edinburgh during his lifetime include many of the most notorious in British legal history because Edinburgh then contained many of the most able judges and advocates in the land.

Roughead was himself a skilful lawyer but it is on his chronicles of murder cases that his fame, throughout the English speaking world, rests. These included that of Eugène Marie Chantrelle, the Edinburgh Wife Killer; of The Brides in the Bath; of Dr. William Palmer, the Rugeley Poisoner and about two hundred more. Whittington-Egan points out in his biographical introduction that the hallmark of the chronicles is the rich, wide-ranging intelligence Roughead brings to bear on proven evidences of human error and wrong-doing, not censoriously but truthfully. His records describe every significant trial for murder held in the Edinburgh High Court of the Judiciary between 1889 and 1949. Known as 'the murderer's albatross' for his unfailing presence in court, he thought of himself as a 'teller of tales', never a criminologist. As a Writer to the Signet he became absorbed in individual life stories and the conditions lying behind crime. 'What appealed to me', he wrote, 'was the human element, the dramatic quality of the facts', and he aimed above all at combining accuracy with 'readableness'. How well he succeeded, both as editor of the *Notable British Trials* series and as legal essayist in journals, is amply demonstrated here.

The book is workmanlike and satisfyingly informative, almost one third of it, 'The Murderer's Albatross', being composed of a description of Roughead's life, pursuits and far reaching contacts. His essay entitled 'Enjoyment of Murder: a Criminous Reverie', written for the 1938 publication in America of a selection of his tales, introduces two further sections of the book — 'Murder File' and 'Fact File' — in which by phenomenally careful research the author has collated, amplified and cross-referenced all available information about trials, murders and the extraneous circumstances relating to those crimes alluded to in his biographical chapter. By means of an original method of marginal indexing these histories may easily be followed through. M stands for Murder File, F for Fact File: M1 and F1 together provide both case facts and biographical notes. The initial narrative may therefore be read,

extraordinary story that it is, without interruption. A bibliography of Roughead's Chronicles and Essays is finally appended. It includes the dates and places of first and subsequent publication. The author of this book has written a scholarly history of the work of a renowned legal historian — the first comprehensive account — in a style worthy of William Roughead's own exacting standards.

BETTY ABEL

## PASTORAL-HISTORICAL-COMICAL

*Amaryllis Brown: A Pastoral Romance.* Donald Bruce. Penygraig Press. 151pp. £7.95.

This *jeu d'esprit* is a parody of Elizabethan fiction. It is set in a part of West Wales thickly populated with mythological characters, mostly classical but some Welsh. The plot, slight as it is, concerns a few human characters almost as bizarre as the rest of the cast, and behind their manoeuvres are some political references Elizabethans would have hesitated to mention. There are the usual transvestite complications and lyrical interludes. It is all very amusing, especially to those familiar with Elizabethan romance.

BRUCE PATTISON

## SHORTER REVIEWS

**War and Aftermath in Vietnam** (Routledge, £40) and **Unholy Grail: The US and the Wars in Vietnam 1965-8** (Routledge, £30). These two books on the Vietnam war, the first by T. Louise Brown and the second by Professor Larry Cable, complement each other. Miss Brown's provides a wider view of Vietnamese society, and of the background and consequences of the war, and includes a study of the role of public opinion in America. Professor Cable's study is more specific. It covers the period between the sending of US troops and the address by Lyndon Johnson that the Americans' war efforts were to be limited and that he would not stand for another term as President. Mr. Cable's book is based on manuscript material in various US archives and tells us much about American war planning in general and the background to the defeat in Southeast Asia. Each book in its own way makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of this sad chapter in recent history.

Donald Nicol, formerly Professor of Modern Greek and Byzantine History at King's College, London, and now at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, puts his specialist knowledge of late Byzantine history to use in compiling **A Biographical Dictionary of Byzantine History** (Seaby, £18.50). It is at once concise but comprehensive, vivid but authoritative. Everyone is here who mattered in the world run by and from Constantinople from its founding in 330 to the day when the Ottoman Turks captured it in 1453: emperors and empresses, patriarchs and philosophers, writers and soldiers. This is a valuable reference book, firmly rooted in the original Greek sources, and with an excellent bibliography.

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# Contemporary Review

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## A BREATHING-SPACE IN SCOTLAND

### by R. D. Kernohan

IT is not easy to say whether the discontents that have given British politics a 'Scottish Question' have been eased, inflamed, or merely redefined by the Conservative victory in the British General Election. Politics will have to settle down again before it is clear whether the question of Scotland's future will be posed again in the same terms as at this year's General Election or in some new and even more dramatic form.

At first sight the situation has not greatly changed. John Major's new Government still faces the Scottish problem he inherited from Mrs. Thatcher. It has only 11 of the 72 Scottish MPs (as against 10 in 1987 and nine at the dissolution) and a slight swing towards it only increased the Conservative share of the Scottish poll from 24 to just under 26 per cent. 752,584 votes as against 713,089 in 1987.

Labour holds on to 49 Scottish seats, having regained the Govan constituency it lost to the Scottish National Party (SNP) at a spectacular by-election won by the SNP deputy leader Jim Sillars, still far better known than party leader Alex Salmond. The Liberal Democrats and the Nationalists (with nine and three seats respectively) remain where they were in 1987, though the SNP vote rose from 14 to 21 per cent and the Liberal one fell from 19 to 13 per cent — giving them the share of seats they could expect under proportional representation.

The Conservatives still face the practical problem of having to find their team of Scottish Ministers from a dangerously weak parliamentary base and the political one of countering the claim that they have no 'mandate' to govern Scotland. Their scope for making use of Scottish parliamentary committees remains very limited. And at a time when all the Opposition parties are committed to some form of Scottish Parliament — though there is a world of difference between Labour's devolutionary scheme and SNP claims for independence — any modest scheme the Conservatives might consider for an Assembly subordinate to Westminster and without tax-raising powers would divide their own party and win little support outside it.

Yet the Conservatives are so mightily relieved at the Scottish election results that their modest satisfaction can be mistaken for euphoria. They not only escaped the destruction threatened if a swing to Labour had gone

with an SNP upsurge, but were spared what might have been the most harrowing prospect for them, the task of governing Scotland with a handful of MPs in a hung Parliament.

In the circumstances of the 1992 election in Scotland, given the strident mood of the Scottish media, the expectations of the other parties, and the talk of a 'Tory-free zone', even Conservative survival seemed like a famous victory. It was not merely a case of Opposition politicians believing their own propaganda, encouraged by the anti-Conservative line in the Glasgow *Herald* as well as the *Scotsman* and by the contorted and unconvincing conversion of the *Sun* Scottish edition to nationalism. Public opinion polling, among its other 1992 errors, not only underestimated Conservative support in Scotland but got the order of the parties wrong, suggesting that the SNP would run second and, though frustrated in industrial Labour seats, would probably humiliate Secretary of State Ian Lang in Galloway. It came third overall and Mr. Lang survived.

But if Scottish Conservatism is relieved, and the Union reprieved for the time being even without devolution, the other parties are frustrated. It will take time to see how far this frustration extends in Scottish public opinion, how deep it goes, and how it is handled by the Major Government. John Major arouses none of the personal hostility which Mrs. Thatcher provoked. He is probably even a more acceptable face of English Conservatism than the one presented by the more aloof Edward Heath in the days when Tory policy took more account of Scotland's industrial problems. The Scots will now grudgingly but realistically accept the most painful of recent decisions, the impending loss of the Ravenscraig steel strip mill, as a Labour Government would probably have had to do anyway. There may be concessions in other areas. Whatever Michael Heseltine does at Trade and Industry will be presented to his party's maximum advantage (and his own) and Malcolm Rifkind will be expected to prove less awkward than Tom King over defence installations and threatened regiments, especially if his Ministry has had second thoughts anyway about the number of infantry battalions needed in a troubled world.

None of this, however, addresses the argument which was heard even in the first sting of Labour defeat and SNP frustration: that 75 per cent of the Scottish electorate voted for parties which had committed themselves to major constitutional change, even though the Lib-Lab devolutionary approach is totally inconsistent with the Nationalist policy of 'independence in Europe'.

A coalition of left-wing Labour MPs, trade union officials, and pop singers emerged overnight on a 'Scotland United' label and hoped rather optimistically for demonstrations after the style of Prague and Leipzig. Scotland's least convincing Vaclav Havel, the left-wing MP George Galloway, wanted to 'mobilise and examine passive civil disobedience'. He and others talked again about the parliamentary disruption which was mooted in 1987 and never really materialised. And while this radical coalition agreed to campaign for a 'multi-option referendum' about devo-

lution and independence, with rather uneasy backing from the main body of Scots Labour MPs and Shadow Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar, it seemed uncertain whether to attempt to take over or to bury the Scottish Constitutional Convention which, in the absence of the SNP as well as the Conservatives, had become a Lib-Lab front organisation.

There were, however, two much more significant but contradictory themes in Scottish Opposition politics. The election result had shown even more emphatically than before that Labour hopes of eventual return to power at Westminster were closely linked to the survival of the Union and even the retention of a complement of Scottish MPs larger than a strict population quota might suggest. The result also seemed likely to enhance the power within the Labour Party of three Scottish politicians more formidable than the earnestly likeable Mr. Dewar: John Smith, Robin Cook, and (youngest of the three, with more time to wait) Gordon Brown. Whether or not John Smith moves smoothly from being Shadow Chancellor to Leader of the Opposition and of the Labour Party, the Scots triumvirate ensures that Scotland will be prominent, even at times dominant, in Labour's bid to remain an alternative Government and in any moves towards an accommodation with the Liberal Democrats. Mr. Cook has long appeared Labour's most convinced convert to proportional representation at Westminster.

The other dominant theme is likely to be the SNP's attempt to play pall-bearer at a Labour burial and to argue that Scotland's only alternative Government is an independent Government. The SNP had hoped to exploit both the emotions which would have accompanied the creation of a devolutionary Scots Parliament and the frustrations and possible conflicts which would have followed even under a Labour Government. It eagerly welcomed and exploited Labour's anguish.

But until misled by the atmosphere created in the campaign and enhanced by the public opinion polls, the SNP had doubted the prospects for a Labour victory. Long before the election results were complete it was drowning its own sorrows by gloating over Labour's defeat and eagerly seizing on every claim that Neil Kinnock's departure would still leave Labour unelectable. It even explained away its own failure in Scotland (as measured against its hopes and expectations) by arguing that the Scots had been misled by Labour's over-confidence and the polls which sustained it. It claimed, and probably believed, that if Scotland had known Labour would lose it would have moved decisively to the SNP; and it looked forward to local election gains at a time of low Labour morale, though its modest advance in the district councils fell far below its hopes.

Such claims need to be weighed with caution, whatever immediate advantage the SNP exacts from Labour confusion after defeat. A substantial Labour vote held up even in the Scottish Tory seats where their own party had no chance and the SNP were the main challengers. The 39 per cent of Scottish voters who gave Labour its great majority of Scottish seats seemed more responsive to Labour's line on the National Health Service, unemployment, welfare, and pensions than on a Scottish

Parliament. The SNP has failed to hold on to any of the seats it has captured from Labour at various times since Mrs. Winnie Ewing's Hamilton by-election victory 25 years ago. Its main political achievement so far, apart from its successes with the Scottish media, has been to take a leftish social democrat line and still, with the help of fishing and farming discontents, hold on to three traditionally Tory seats in the North-East. But even that is a tribute to its skill in being '"agin" the Government' rather than in carrying conviction as a Scottish Government-in-waiting.

It can still argue that it has built a more solid base of support and has more appeal to young voters than its share of the vote would suggest. Even the 'rogue polls' before the election campaign which suggested half the Scottish voters favouring independence cannot be wholly ignored, despite the failure of public opinion polling in the more precise business of predicting shares of the vote. A decade ago a readiness to support Scottish independence (or at least to consider it) tended to lag behind the inclination to give the SNP a protest vote. Now, even though such polling evidence needs to be taken with caution, the situation might even be the other way round. Some Scots may have an emotional hankering after independence but still incline from tradition or realism to support Labour or the Liberal Democrats.

If there has been a change what caused it? The SNP's stock answer will be '13 years of English Tory rule' while Labour remains allegedly 'unelectable' and ineffective in defending Scottish interests. A profounder answer may be that Scotland could not be wholly untouched by the fashion for nationalism which has asserted itself all over Europe, from the Basque country to the Baltic and the Balkans.

And how can or should British Government respond? Back in the late 1970s the Callaghan Administration took the course which proved politically disastrous at the time but which has since made it impossible for Labour to change direction: to risk the consequences of conflict between a devolved Parliament and Westminster. It was a political impossibility for Labour to reverse that policy in the 1980s and remains so.

Since Edward Heath's impulsive flirtation with devolution in the late 1960s — when he proposed a Scottish Assembly with no tax powers and explicitly subordinate to Westminster, but did not follow up the scheme in Government — Conservatism has become even more unionist. A strong unionist line seemed to make Mrs. Thatcher's problems with the Scots even more acute. But it did not prevent the very modest recovery under John Major and may even have helped it, giving Scottish Conservatives something to fight for and consolidating the support for them in Scottish business and finance.

Now the Conservatives have a fresh breathing-space but little new room for constitutional manoeuvre. Any return to the Heath Assembly policy would split a party enjoying its first modest success for years. It would also fail to satisfy the Tories' media critics, far less any of the Opposition parties. There is little scope left for further administrative devolution, for the Scottish Office is already in effect a federation of Scottish Ministries

dealing with health, home affairs, agriculture, education and development, while the separate legal system has long given Scotland the equivalent of what Continental Europeans would call a Ministry of Justice. And though Scottish Ministers profess themselves anxious to develop more devolution-within-Parliament (at Westminster, with excursions to Edinburgh) through greater use of Commons committees, their practical freedom of action is limited. They cannot devolve real power to committees when they have so few Scottish MPs, especially MPs free of ministerial responsibilities.

When John Major said he would 'take stock' after the election, he probably meant that he would want to see how bad the situation was before deciding how to respond to it. Even the notion of a referendum has crossed Tory minds, though perhaps mainly as a contingency plan to save the Union if it were threatened by the advance of the SNP at Labour's expense. The kind of referendum demanded by the Scotland United movement is obviously ruled out.

Now Tory thinking will be conditioned by hopes that the worst is past, at least in coping with the decline of heavy industry. It will probably turn (as it did after an earlier but vaguer upsurge of nationalism in the 1950s) to a search for practical improvements in Scottish government and for gestures to affirm that the United Kingdom is not just an extension of England, even of London. The style may be set by the European heads of government meeting in Edinburgh at the end of the year. Edinburgh also remains a possible location for any new European institutions that may be wholly or partly based in Britain. Wilder notions that flash across Ministers' minds may include consideration of whether English peers and MPs could be induced to come North for a State opening or special session of Parliament.

The future mood of Scotland will be much more influenced by the condition of Britain and the way the Major style of Conservatism is applied in Scottish conditions. The Conservative victory will take some of the tension out of health and education reforms, though entrenched trade union hostility to them is probably even more powerful in Scotland than in England. Other reforms (in British Rail for example) offer scope for an appeal to Scots enthusiasm and sensitivity — and for disaster if wrongly handled. The tragedy of Ravenscraig and the Lanarkshire steel country might have been averted if privatisation of steel had been able to revert to the old structure of the industry before nationalisation, with its vigorous Scottish element. Perhaps that warning will have been heeded, especially now that Labour's failure ensures a clear run for the only distinctively Scottish privatisations, those in electricity.

If the Conservatives are to make effective use of their breathing-space to ease Scottish discontents — and turn back the nationalist tide — they will probably have to depend more on the general success of their economic and social policies than on specifically constitutional initiatives. However, one substantial (and controversial) possibility is a reform of Scottish local government to base it on a single tier of all-purpose authorities, abolishing all or most of the present regional councils. These would be more mourned

by councillors and officials than by the voters of any party. The reform might also yield some scope for an Assembly with a more formal role than the present convention of local authorities, even though such a body would rouse little public enthusiasm.

The future of nationalism and particularly of its political manifestation, the SNP, will also be influenced by the unpredictable course of events in the Labour Party and in the development of its flirtations with PR and the Liberal Democrats. A Lib-Lab alliance would be a dominant force in Scottish politics, assuming the SNP makes no dramatic progress during Labour's post-election difficulties.

But one of political life's little ironies should be noted. Such an alliance would, on the 1992 voting figures, hold about 60 of Scotland's 72 parliamentary seats. On the 'fairer voting system' which the Liberals would demand (but could not expect till the election after next) it would take about 38.

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[R. D. Kernohan is the former editor of *Life and Work: The Record of the Church of Scotland.*]

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*Editor's Note:*
The results of the local council elections on 7 May in much of England — London did not have any elections — and in all of Scotland followed the main trends of the General Election. The Conservatives increased their share of the popular vote. In Scotland Labour's vote decreased and they lost overall control of Edinburgh.

The July number of *Contemporary Review* includes *China Debates Capitalism* by Keramat Poorsoltan and *The Skull Beneath the Skin* by Anthony Harrigan.

# SUBSIDIARITY IN STATE AND CHURCH

## by Roger Greenacre

THE history of language is fascinating. There are words that are so new that it is difficult to find them even in the best dictionaries, but which — almost overnight — seem to acquire so much importance that one is driven to wonder how we managed so long without them. Such a word is *subsidiarity*, a word of growing importance in both the political and ecclesiastical worlds but still unknown perhaps to most people.

The word and the concept which it defines were first articulated in Germany between the two world wars and given expression for the first time in a formal and authoritative document by Pope Pius XI in his encyclical of 1931 on social questions, *Quadragesimo anno*. It is held to be a principle of natural law and was first called into service to defend the rights of the human person, the family and other smaller and local communities in the face of the absolute claims of Fascist and Marxist totalitarian states. It presupposes some kind of structured ordering of society, but, in order to counter the natural tendency of the larger unit to centralize all authority and power and so to deprive the smaller unit of any real autonomy, it posits the principle that just as smaller units exist to provide help *(subsidium)* to the human person in his search for self-realization, so the higher levels of authority exist to provide help and support for the smaller in their search for self-realization.

The 'distribution of competencies' within the social and political reality must therefore begin with a 'presumption of competency' accorded to the smaller unit; it is intervention at a higher level that has always to justify itself. It requires *positively* that all communities encourage individuals to exercise their own self-responsibility and that larger communities do the same for smaller ones; it requires *negatively* that communities must not deprive individuals or smaller communities of their right to self-responsibility.[1]

It is easy to see how important this principle is as the key to the distribution of competencies between individuals and communities and between smaller and larger communities in the political sphere and how it is increasingly being used by people like Jacques Delors (himself a practising Roman Catholic, deeply influenced by Catholic social thinking) as the ideological tool for the regulation of the European Community. It has important — increasingly important — implications for the working out of relationships within federal states and within new Commonwealths — for example in Yugoslavia and in the former Soviet Union. It has implications also for the current debate about devolution in the United Kingdom.

In the Roman Catholic Church the principle of subsidiarity first enunciated by Pius XI was further championed as a key principle of civil society by his successors; the first indication that it also applies within the Church was given by Pius XII in 1946. It was more widely invoked at

the time of the Second Vatican Council both with regard to the rights of the laity and with regard to the role of bishops in the government of their dioceses and in the newly emerging Episcopal Conferences. At this time it began to be realized more clearly that the Church would face a severe credibility problem if it failed to apply to its own structures a principle it was so insistently urging upon civil society. It is still very much a live issue in the Roman Catholic Church with regard to the continuing controversy about the authority of Episcopal Conferences (under attack both from the Curia and from some individual bishops) and about the rights of particular dioceses, particularly those which had managed to hold on to the right of capitular election.

It could be argued that in the Church of England the principle of subsidiarity, although nowhere formally acknowledged, is implicitly assumed in the ordering of synodical government, with the guaranteed rights of parochial church councils and deanery and diocesan synods acting as a restraint on the authority of General Synod and with the authority of the Bishop in his diocese subject also to similar restraints. It might also be concluded after a rather superficial acquaintance with the concept that Anglicans have an exemplary record in honouring the principle — whether they know that they are doing so or (as is more likely) not!

It must be remembered however that the principle of subsidiarity works in two directions. Historically speaking, both in the political and ecclesial spheres, it has been called into service as a necessary amber light to warn centralized autocracies not to intervene in matters which can properly be resolved at a lower rung of the hierarchical ladder. But it can and should sometimes be called into service as a no less necessary amber light to warn local communities not to make authoritative decisions which affect the well-being of the wider community and could threaten the ability of such local communities to continue to live together harmoniously in a wider community. Catholic minded Anglicans in England should welcome the growing authority of the European Community and its courts if for no other reason than that it effectively gives the lie to the heresy of absolute national sovereignty claimed by Henry VIII in the triumphalist language of the Act for the Restraint of Appeals of 1533. If a supranational authority now begins to make itself felt in secular affairs, should it not also do so in the affairs of the Church? If the Queen's 'supreme governorship' of the State is no longer exempt 'from the intermeddling of any exterior person or persons', what about her 'supreme governorship' of the Church?

It needs perhaps to be added that the crucial failure of the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops in 1988 lay not in its refusal to give an authoritative ruling on the question of the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate, but in the reason given for that refusal. It could (and should) have appealed to the need for consensus among the Churches and, more particularly, within the universal episcopate of the Church Catholic (not the same thing as the episcopate of the Anglican

Communion); instead it left each autonomous Province to resolve the question for itself.

The doctrine of absolute and sovereign 'provincial autonomy' formally accepted for the Anglican Communion at the Lambeth Conference of 1988 is in its way as much a threat to the principle of subsidiarity as Vatican 'interference' in the life of local churches in the Roman Catholic Church seems to be. The carefully graded relationship worked out for synodical government in the Church of England comes to an abrupt summit in the General Synod (and in the Parliament of the United Kingdom); there is no provision for any supranational authority with any binding force whether within the Anglican Communion or beyond it. To the question 'What matters of faith and order must the Church of England declare itself incompetent to resolve unilaterally?' there is no authoritative answer, and so the further question as to where and by whom such matters can be resolved barely arises. The challenging question put so sharply a little while before Lambeth 1988 by the late Canon G. V. Bennett in his *Crockford's Preface* as to what credibility can be accorded to a communion of churches which possesses no structure of authority strong enough to maintain it in unity and to preserve it from the threat of its own disintegration has still received no answer. Indeed, the most recent proposals in the Anglican Church of Australia (strongly divided on this issue) to avoid further conflict by retreating to a position tantamount to 'diocesan autonomy' only further highlight the threat. It is therefore difficult to deny that the failure of the Anglican Communion to act credibly as an ecclesial reality goes a long way in explaining the cool reception given by Rome to the Final Report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC).

The Final Report of ARCIC-I does not invoke the principle of subsidiarity by name, but in its treatment of the need for both conciliar and primatial authority in the Church at every level — including the universal — and in its vision of the ministry of the Bishop of Rome in maintaining and safeguarding unity and communion between the local churches at the universal level it is surely acknowledging the principle's validity. It is moreover difficult to deny that a question such as the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate is a matter which affects vitally the ability of local churches to recognise one another and to recognise one another's sacraments and ordained ministries and so affects unity and communion at the universal level.

Among the bishops of the Church of England no one has shewn a more perceptive awareness of this issue than Mark Santer, Bishop of Birmingham and Co-Chairman of ARCIC-II. He is personally in favour of the ordination of women to the priesthood, but it is difficult to see how he (and any who share his thinking) can vote for Final Approval of the present legislation in General Synod when he can write:

> In thinking of the exercise of authority, it is always important to remember the principle of subsidiarity. If we are concerned with communion in a diocese, only diocesan authority is involved; if with

> communion at a provincial level, only provincial authority. But if we are talking about those elements in the life of the churches whereby they are able to recognise one another as sharing one communion of faith and life, then some joint organs of authority, recognised by all, are required.[2]

Many of us are accused of lack of candour when we consistently argue that though agnostic or even marginally in favour of the proponents on the strictly theological question as to whether women can become priests, we cannot recognise that any province of the Anglican Communion or indeed even the Anglican Communion as a whole (if it had the will and the authority so to decide) possesses the necessary authority to resolve this question. In fact we are only guilty of holding firmly to a clear and coherent ecclesiological principle, the principle of subsidiarity. The credibility of the appeal of our Church to be a part of the Catholic Church depends upon the recognition of the necessary deference of the part to the whole, as well as the necessary respect of the whole for the part. If for the Church of England 'provincial autonomy' means not according full, final, universal and ecumenical authority to any organ of the Anglican Communion, well and good. If it means not recognising any authority at all outside 'this realm of England' then in all honesty we should relinquish the claim to catholicity.

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NOTES

1. J. A. Komonchak: 'Subsidiarity in the Church' in *The Nature and Future of Episcopal Conferences* (The Jurist, XLVIII, Washington, 1988), p.302.
2. Mark Santer: 'The Way Forward' in *Communion and Episcopacy*, ed. J. Draper (Cuddesdon, 1988), p.109.

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[Canon Roger Greenacre is Chancellor of Chichester Cathedral. His article is adapted from one originally written for *Ambit*, the Newsletter of the Association for Apostolic Ministry (February 1992, No. 9).]

# PRESIDENT DE KLERK'S OPTIONS

## by James Hamill

WITH President de Klerk's referendum victory having been comfortably secured, one issue is now set to dominate the South African political agenda over the next six months: namely, the nature of the government's relationship with the ANC which, theoretically at least, should have improved as a result of the referendum. During the three-week campaign, the ANC played a discreet, although highly responsible, supporting role by discouraging mass protests at a 'whites only' vote, however offensive that spectacle was to black opinion, and by avoiding being too vocal in their support for a 'Yes' vote. In all likelihood that would have backfired, giving substance to the routine far-right charge that a vote for de Klerk was only a more circuitous means of voting for Nelson Mandela. For the ANC leadership, this was an extremely difficult balancing act which it managed to perform with some skill, demonstrating, in the process, an impressive degree of political maturity.

**Post-referendum trends**

The received wisdom is that the negotiations at the Conference for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) will now gather pace and the ANC and the National Party (NP) will move to cement what has become a *de facto* alliance propelling South Africa towards the sunlit uplands of a new democracy. Whilst it is undoubtedly true, given their relative stature within the black and white communities, that nothing can pass through Codesa which lacks either ANC or NP approval, this analysis is, nonetheless, rather superficial and talk of an 'alliance', at this stage, is more of a glib catchphrase than an accurate representation of reality. Certainly, there appears to be nothing in de Klerk's post-referendum behaviour which would justify so sanguine a forecast. On the contrary, the State President, apparently flushed with success, immediately adopted a much more confrontational stance towards the ANC. For example, a 'senior government source' told *The Daily Telegraph* on March 22nd that the ANC should not 'push its luck', adding:

> The ANC seems to have interpreted the white vote as a mandate for its own policies. We have to tell them that they have got it all wrong. The whites did not reject the extremists of the right-wing to opt for the extremists of the left. They voted for continued negotiations and that is going to be a long, hard road.

The de Klerk government, its confidence now almost fully restored following last year's Inkathagate scandal, and with international pressure now being relaxed, seems to believe that it is once more in a position from which it can control the pace and direction of the country's reform process. Consequently, it is now making new demands of the ANC and not merely stalling on many of the ANC's own demands but ignoring some completely whilst taking others and refashioning them to suit government specifications. Examples were plentiful within days of the March 17 referendum:—

(i). on March 22, the Johannesburg *Sunday Times* reported that de Klerk was demanding that the ANC disband its armed wing, *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (MK), as a condition for further talks. The MK has effectively been in 'mothballs' since the 'Pretoria Minute' of August 4, 1990 although former MK cadres are currently serving in township Self Defence Units (SDUs) to help deter the mass Inkatha attacks which have become a feature of life in the Transvaal townships. However, as there has been no evidence of actual MK anti-state activity since that date, this is really an example of issue creation on de Klerk's part — a convenient 'stick' with which to beat the ANC for reasons discussed below. For its part, the ANC has always insisted that only when the government surrenders political control to an interim administration, and only when the security forces are compelled to act in a non-partisan fashion, will it formally terminate, rather than merely suspend, the 'armed struggle'.

(ii). on March 26 the government issued an ultimatum to the ANC, and other black groups, to halt township violence forthwith or face the suspension of talks on a new constitutional dispensation. The ANC believes this to be a thoroughly discredited approach in which violence is crudely characterised as 'black-on-black', an explanation which conveniently ignores both the government's past complicity in township unrest and its continuing failure to launch a far-reaching purge of a security apparatus repeatedly implicated in acts of violence. The ANC believes, therefore, that de Klerk is putting the cart before the horse as unrest can only be significantly reduced if the security forces begin to behave impartially. Consequently, on April 3, as a virtual civil war raged in Alexandra, Mandela called for an international monitoring force — whether drawn from the OAU or the UN — to be deployed in the townships. This was a clear indication that the ANC had now lost all faith in de Klerk's ability to rein in his own security forces. Indeed, Mandela accused the government of being an 'enemy of democracy' which was determined 'to weaken the ANC and make it possible for white supremacy to continue'.

(iii). the government announced plans to extend VAT to nine basic food items — including soya beans, maize and brown bread — beginning on March 31. These had been exempted following mass opposition, and a two-day COSATU-led general strike, in November 1991. On March 20, Nelson Mandela, the ANC president, threatened that the ANC would use every available means of protest to halt the increases, 'even if we destroy the economy'. On March 31, under pressure from business leaders who feared strike action, the government staged a tactical retreat and withdrew the proposal. VAT was, however, introduced on milk and rice which means opposition grievances will continue to fester in this area.

(iv). on March 23, de Klerk proposed ending the moratorium on executions previously announced in February 1990, a move which had not

been discussed in any of the Codesa working committees. This provoked a strong protest from human rights groups and from the ANC which denounced it as 'ill-considered and unacceptable'. The Justice Minister, Kobie Coetsee, eventually staged a climbdown on March 27 but the episode was indicative of the confidence which has become such a striking feature of government behaviour in the immediate post-referendum period.

(v). in the week following the referendum, the government sanctioned the police detention of a senior ANC official, the secretary-general of the organisation's Youth League, Raphu Molekane.

(vi). Finance Minister, Barend du Plessis, continued to resist both union and business calls for a round-table forum — encompassing government, unions and business — which would determine economic policy during the transition period. The government appears unwilling to countenance relinquishing power in such a sensitive area.

(vii). most crucially, government negotiators have also been in the business of trying to recover ground initially conceded at Codesa when they found themselves in a weaker bargaining position. This is particularly evident in the National Party's latest proposals on the core issues of an interim government and a constituent assembly. In the week following the referendum the government tabled new proposals at Working Group 3 of Codesa under which the current National Party-controlled executive, and the existing tricameral parliament, would remain in place prior to the holding of elections. The ANC and other opposition forces would be restricted to participation in a number of advisory councils whose recommendations, whether relating to the electoral process or any other matter, de Klerk would be free to ignore. This would be firmly in line with de Klerk's undertaking to introduce new 'transitional arrangements' but it would fall well short of the ANC's demand for a fully-fledged, multi-party interim administration which it believes is the vital key unlocking the door to the 'new South Africa'. De Klerk would, in effect, be exploiting a semantic loophole whilst appearing to make an important concession. The ANC response was predictably hostile with Jay Naidoo, the General-Secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), threatening 'a general strike unlike anything experienced before in South Africa' unless an interim government, conforming to the ANC model, was in place by July 1992. On the equally vexed question of an elected constituent assembly, the latest proposals of de Klerk's negotiators are no less contentious. On March 30th, the government proposed amendments to the ANC position that the new constitution should be drawn up by a single chamber elected by universal adult suffrage on a common voters roll. It suggested there should also be a constitutional input — a veto in effect — from a second chamber or Senate which would include the tricameral parliament and homeland administrations and would ensure disproportionate representation for minorities and regions.

For the NP, this would be an ideal structure both for restricting ANC influence over the drafting process and for ensuring the inclusion of those key elements of its own constitutional proposals, such as minority vetoes and mandatory coalition government, unveiled in September 1991. The executive growing out of elections — provisionally scheduled for December 1992 or early 1993 — would be multi-party in character and would serve for a minimum period of three years with the presidency rotating every six months between the five largest parties. The ANC reaction to this was again vitriolic. On March 31, in an official statement which confirmed the deterioration in ANC-government relations, the movement declared:

> This *ad hoc* and specially constructed bicameralism will be seen by the majority of South Africans and by the world at large as a reminder that the cadaver of apartheid still rules from the grave into which it was said to have been cast. One cannot escape the conclusion that the arguments against majority rule are being advanced not so much because of the principle involved but because of dissatisfaction with whom the majority will be. Put quite simply, "simple majoritarianism" was good enough for the whites for 82 years, but will not be good enough for the blacks today, unless, that is, they promise to vote for the party presently in office, in which case the virtues of majority rule might re-assert themselves.

**'The smack of firm government'**

Numerous factors are at work here shaping the current belligerent posture of the de Klerk administration. First, the State President is simply dipping his toe into the water to test the political temperature and to establish precisely what he can and cannot get away with in a post-referendum environment in which his authority has been visibly enhanced. It is, in short, de Klerk, not Mandela, who is pushing his luck.

Secondly, he is moving to take advantage of a 'window of opportunity' which is now open to his government in the shape of a post-referendum international 'honeymoon' period. ANC complaints over de Klerk's handling of events, however legitimate, are likely to be less sympathetically treated over the next six months as the international community loses interest in the daily minutiae of South African politics and concentrates instead only upon the 'big picture'. Moreover, the possibility of renewed economic pressure on the country now seems too remote to merit serious discussion. The outcome of the referendum appears to have sounded the death-knell for sanctions with even Denmark, hitherto the European state most reluctant to relax punitive measures, agreeing to phase them out. That, in turn, paved the way for the European Community to lift the oil embargo against South Africa which had been in place since 1985 — a decision duly taken on April 6.

Third, de Klerk may feel that the referendum demonstrated the potency of the NP's electoral machine and that with this same media and big business juggernaut supporting him, he can look forward to a creditable

performance in post-*apartheid* elections, perhaps capturing sufficient support to deny the ANC undisputed political hegemony. Thus, the government may believe that a more combative approach towards the ANC can be developed without undue risk attached.

Finally, de Klerk wants to keep his white constituency with him by demonstrating that the assurances he offered during the referendum — namely, that he was about to embark upon a zealous defence of minority rights rather than a political kamikaze mission — were genuine and not simply a temporary expedient designed to see him through a potentially difficult campaign. Taking a tough line in negotiations with the ANC is the most obvious means available to demonstrate such resolve to the white population.

**Belligerence versus belligerence**

Should de Klerk persist with this approach, however, South Africa is clearly heading for major problems and the referendum will have led the country not across the Rubicon but into it. There is a strong sense of *deja vu* surrounding these developments. From August 1990 to July 1991, the government deployed not dissimilar tactics of political brinkmanship which typically involved it in reneging on, or, more accurately, redefining agreements reached with the ANC followed by maximum delay in their implementation. The pattern became a familiar one whether the issue under discussion was the return of ANC exiles or the release of political prisoners. de Klerk now appears to be rediscovering the merits of this approach and while his ambitions have certainly been modified — the emphasis has moved towards containment of a future ANC government rather than a seemingly hopeless quest for the movement's electoral defeat — he does appear to be buoyed up by post-referendum euphoria and infused with a new 'can do' spirit. The dangers of this should be obvious. Indeed, to quote a popular maxim, we hardly require the crystal ball when we can read the book. The end results of this policy the first time around are all too familiar: a massive upsurge in township violence, the breakdown of negotiations and, in July 1991, Inkathagate — the nadir of the 'new South Africa'. In view of this, it is essential that de Klerk should not be carried away by the referendum result and mistakenly seek to apply its lessons to the wider political arena. The Conservatives may have been routed but the ANC cannot be brushed aside in the same ruthless fashion. If over-confidence on the government's part continues to be translated into unilateral, and deeply controversial, political initiatives, that will, in turn, generate fierce resistance from the ANC-SACP-COSATU tripartite alliance including strikes, street protests and, ultimately, a boycott of negotiations with all the attendant problems such a rise in tension will bring. The government appears to believe that it may be possible to extract concessions from an ANC leadership so intimidated by the impressive coalition of forces in the de Klerk camp — the domestic media, big business, many foreign governments and large sections of the international press — that it will lose any remaining enthusiasm for the tactics of mass confrontation. It would be unwise to rely upon this as the recent ANC statements,

already cited, make clear. Throughout the referendum campaign, the ANC virtually practiced a self-denying ordinance and was prepared to tolerate de Klerk's attacks upon the movement as a 'cruel necessity' if the State President was to preserve his white support base. That restraint, however, always had a limited lifespan and there is little doubt that if the verbal hostility continues then it may seriously pollute the atmosphere surrounding negotiations. For example, denunciation of the ANC as 'left-wing extremists' hardly suggests that the government considers the ANC to be an essential part of the South African political centre which must hold if there is to be a durable settlement.

De Klerk, despite the new authority which the referendum has undoubtedly conferred upon him within the white community, needs to bear in mind three potentially uncomfortable facts: first, whilst he may be a colossus in white political affairs, he is not nearly such an awesome figure when he moves beyond that narrow world and 68.7% of whites still represents only some 12% of the total South African population — a statistic to concentrate the mind of any white leader. Second, any deal not endorsed by the ANC is almost certain to founder at ground level given the movement's solid support in the black community where it dwarfs any other political formation. A Markinor opinion poll taken in November 1991 put ANC support at 72% compared to 5% for the NP and 1% for Inkatha. While there is an obvious government attempt underway to detach ANC negotiators from the movement's grassroots, this is unlikely to enjoy much success following the July 1991 Durban conference where considerable hostility was expressed at the tendency of the ANC's various negotiating teams to 'freelance' and make policy 'on the hoof' without adequate consultation. Besides, even if temporarily successful, this would ultimately be self-defeating as it would only prompt a grassroots drift towards more radical groups or, more likely, the replacement of the negotiators. There can be no constitutional 'quick fix' which by-passes mass black opinion. Third, de Klerk's negotiating position vis-a-vis the ANC has not necessarily been strengthened by a referendum result which, upon close scrutiny, is very much a double-edged sword for him. Over the past two years, de Klerk has been quite adept at conjuring up the spectre of the far-right threat to justify stalling on key ANC demands such as an interim government, controls on the security forces and an amnesty for all political prisoners. He has not been slow to argue that there are limits as to how far he can be expected to go without triggering a haemorrhage of support to the ultras. The sheer scale of his March victory may now have removed that card as the right-wing, although more than a discredited rump, is certainly no longer a national political threat. The referendum, in short, should not blind de Klerk to these wider realities nor, contrary to popular myth, should it be considered an unalloyed blessing for the State President.

**Conclusion — Towards the 'historic compromise'?**

De Klerk is, of course, fully entitled to seek lasting political arrangements which will protect the interests of his predominantly white constituency.

No one can realistically expect him to act otherwise. Certainly the ANC has shed the illusion, which it appeared to entertain in the first half of 1990, that de Klerk would simply 'hand over the keys of the Union Buildings [in Pretoria] and ride off into the sunset'. It now has a more realistic perspective on the State President whom it views as a cunning and imaginative political adversary who is clearly no stranger to aggressive negotiating tactics — a nice smile but with 'teeth of steel', to quote Gromyko on Gorbachev. The ANC appears to have few problems in negotiating with de Klerk on that basis and it clearly sees the need — indeed, Mandela had recognised the need while he was still held within the confines of Victor Verster prison — to strike a balance between the demand for majority rule and the accompanying need to ease white fears about their future in a multiracial democracy. For the ANC, the task has been to construct a constitutional framework which would accommodate those twin imperatives and it is now widely understood within the movement that this may well involve the sacrifice of some 'sacred cows', that, after all, being the very essence of negotiation. Consequently, the ANC has framed its proposals specifically to address these fears by agreeing to a majoritarian system with a range of built-in safeguards. These would include: a commitment that any constituent assembly would be guided by principles previously agreed at Codesa; a requirement for a two-thirds majority in the assembly thus necessitating compromise and the accommodation of minority opinion; a proposal that a panel of nine 'eminent South Africans' adjudicate on matters of conflict and, finally, a willingness to consider so-called 'sunset clauses' guaranteeing whites a disproportionate representation in Parliament for a fixed period as with the 1980 Lancaster House agreement on Zimbabwe.

This has inevitably left the ANC open to the charge from the absolutists of the ultra-left — principally from the Pan African Congress (PAC) and the Azanian Peoples Organisation (AZAPO) — that it is in the process of 'selling out' and cannot hope to win at the conference table what it has previously failed to win on the battlefield. The ANC leadership knows this to be cliche-mongering, not merely leftism but infantile leftism particularly as the PAC proved over the years to be more proficient at murderous internecine strife than it ever was at conducting a credible armed-struggle. Given the almost non-existent possibility of actually inflicting a military defeat upon the regime, the ANC leadership came to regard a 'historic compromise' as wholly preferable to the 'scorched earth' approach of the various fringe groups. What it cannot accept, and its rank and file will not in any case allow it to accept, is a return to government by coercion in which de Klerk uses or, more accurately, abuses his control of the state apparatus to push through his own agenda whilst paying lip-service to the concept of negotiation. He cannot expect, in the now familiar phrase, to be both 'referee and player' in the midst of a delicately poised transition process. It is precisely because de Klerk appeared to accept the legitimacy of that argument, last December, that such progress was initially made at Codesa. Any return to the *status quo ante* is, however, likely to bring the

entire Codesa edifice — which to a large extent rests upon mutual trust and goodwill — crashing down. The beneficiaries of that scenario are readily identifiable: those shadowy elements of the Defence Force still committed to destabilization — such as the Directorate of Military Intelligence and the 'Special Forces' units — and, on the white right, the Conservative Party and their first cousins, the *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging* (AWB), *WitWolve* and *Order Boerevolk* para-militaries. In black politics, the beneficiaries would be those groups plainly hostile to the Codesa process: Inkatha, the PAC and AZAPO, organisations which have, thus far, demonstrated only an ability to bring mayhem and sectarianism, whether of the ideological or ethnic variety, to the country.

It would be a rare irony if a referendum held to finally bury the notion that whites could somehow 'go it alone', and to place the country on a more stable footing, succeeded only in encouraging a misguided attempt to reintroduce, albeit through the back door, new, more subtle, forms of white control. These are unlikely to endure but, in the short-term, they are a recipe for the chronic instability which only the enemies of reconciliation, and the sponsors of ethnic conflagration, can welcome. It is, therefore, to be hoped that current NP attitudes are no more than a temporary hangover from the referendum and not a permanent fixture as triumphalism of this kind will prevent the creation of the pragmatic negotiating climate in which a 'historic compromise' can begin to take shape. Thus, the Johannesburg financial newspaper *Business Day* was being rather optimistic when it hailed the referendum result as a 'message of peace and of determination, of goodwill and of clear democratic resolve'. This may yet prove to be the case but perhaps the Swiss publication *Neue Züricher Zeitung* was more accurate when it concluded that 'the referendum of March 17 will have been useful only if it serves to promote reason and moderation on all sides' — the implication being that the country remains some way short of this ideal.

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# MAASTRICHT IN TROUBLE

## by Leo Muray

BRITAIN is taking the Chair in the European Community on July 1st until the end of the year. It will be the most troublesome period in the history of Britain's membership. The European Single Market is to come into force on January 1st. This means that the twelve member countries ought to have ratified the Maastricht Treaty by then. There is also the question of whether President Jacques Delors will have his term of office renewed for another two years. It is unlikely that he will want to if there turns out to be real trouble with the Maastricht Treaty. It is his main achievement and is strategically linked with the acceptance by the EC Council of his 'Package II', his Budget for the next five years. There is also the renewal of the mandates of the members of the Brussels Commission due on that date.

It appears unlikely, however, that Maastricht will have been duly ratified by that date. This is why the 'Euro-Summit' to be held in Edinburgh at the end of December will be the biggest test for Britain. The treaty of Maastricht has lost its glamour. One cause, shown in the recent elections in France, Germany and Italy, is that politicians are losing their authority and their genuineness and sincerity are doubted. And it is politicians and experts who produced Maastricht after years of hard bargaining. It ought to be borne in mind, responsible German sources are now saying, that Maastricht was worked out when politics and the situation were dominated by the facts of a divided Europe. Now politics must be worked out for a less divided and much larger Europe. The EC had to recognize that it must be radically changed and the Rome Treaty must be looked at especially. If there was an enlarged EC, with 18 or 20 members, Britain would be in the Chair every nine or ten years and the membership of the Commission would go up accordingly. The 'Big Four', Britain, France, Italy and Germany might have to abandon their second member. Indeed, Mr. Delors, the fighting head of the Brussels Commission, has already prepared sweeping proposals to change the EC Constitution by setting up a Super-Executive that replaces the Commission itself and the six-monthly rotating Chair of the EC. This is to be put to the Euro-Summit in Edinburgh. It will require key amendments to the Maastricht Treaty. The question is arising whether ratification should wait until the changes have been decided on.

When one sets aside Denmark and Ireland and their referenda, France and Germany, key members, present the main problem to the treaty's approval. In France President Mitterrand has attached ratification of Maastricht to his personal status and prestige. He has engaged on a risky adventure considering his fallen prestige. The Constitutional Court has made Maastricht an issue of national sovereignty. It has decided that there must be three changes in the Fifth Republic Constitution before Maastricht can be ratified. It has caused surprise and embarrassment because the three issues are linked with the current political controversies.

One is the right that Maastricht bestows on all nationals of all member countries to vote in local elections in all member countries where they are resident. But in France elected local authorities have a vote in the Colleges that elect Senators. Therefore that right directly affects France's sovereignty. Equally importantly the proposed famous EMU, Monetary Union, with its 'irreversibly' fixed exchange rate within fixed bands affects the Constitution and so does, thirdly, the rule that visas for non-EC nationals should be regulated in Brussels by majority vote. That, at least, is how the Court sees it.

A hard pressed President Mitterrand is now asking for the Senate and the Assembly to make the necessary changes in the Constitution at a joint session. But a three-fifths majority is needed. Mitterrand's compromise aims at non-French EC residents to be restricted to voting in municipal elections. This can be seen as a new interpretation of the Maastricht Treaty. Even the Socialists and the Giscard Centre are split. President Mitterrand has warned that he will then, in the tradition of de Gaulle, decide on a referendum. But some leading politicians argue that he cannot have a referendum. The fight over Maastricht is likely to go on and if Mitterrand has to have a disputed referendum on Maastricht and loses because, for instance, a vote for EC foreigners is rather unpopular, never mind about a New Europe, Mitterrand is likely to resign, as de Gaulle did in 1969 after losing his referendum. France is therefore likely to be an embarrassing background factor during Britain's chairmanship.

The German situation is equally significant. Some observers are already saying that Maastricht will not be ratified by the time of the New Year. Germany is paying 28% of the total EC budget and Delors, in his five year budget plan, wants to increase expenditure to £60 billion. A unanimous vote of the Bundesrat, the Federal Council of the 16 self-governing Lands, demands a say in what other members contribute. They demand a veto on the transfer of powers envisaged in the Maastricht Treaty and changes in the German constitution to guarantee controls of budget deficits. A two-thirds majority is needed in the Bundesrat and in the Lower House to ratify Maastricht and Chancellor Kohl has been warned that he will not get it. It is significant that in a recent poll 87% of the young and 60% of the middle-aged replied that the cost of Maastricht is too high.

Public opinion, and most politicians, resent the plan that the deutschmark is to disappear in the ECU, the monetary union currency some time in 1996/7. Experts are beginning to warn that the reconditioning of East Germany will take much longer than expected and absorb more resources. This, they warn, will force Germany to fail meeting the standards of economic performance, like the 5% of the Gross National Product, GNP, limit of a budget deficit, the required single currency target for 1996/7. It implies that Germany is now not in a hurry to meet the Maastricht targets. Chancellor Kohl has already warned that the other EC members must take a greater share of the burden of giving aid to the East Europeans.

Britain is facing Germany on several issues. It is regarded as certain that Germany, and Spain, will demand that the famous rebate for Britain's

contribution, acquired by Mrs. Thatcher, must be ended and also that the European Central Bank to run the single currency must be in Frankfurt since Germany will be the chief provider. The sense of crisis is also revealed in a statement by Helmut Schmidt, the last, and extremely successful, Social Democrat Chancellor, who warns that the EC could 'sink towards a Free Trade Zone' if Maastricht was not enacted. If there was no single currency the EC would simply be a Free Trade Zone with a few institutions since this year only a few small steps had been taken towards the real Single Market.

The Germans object especially to the 'Cohesion Fund', set up to transfer considerable, carefully calculated, aid, to the 'Poor Four', Ireland, Greece, Portugal and Spain. Connected with this is Delor's proposal to increase the basic regular contribution to Brussels from 1.2% of the GNP of member countries to 1.37%, an increase of over 10%. Delors is fighting for every half per cent on this. His relations with the Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd are not too good which also means that Britain will have a difficult time in the Chair. When Hurd warned that there was enough in the Brussels kitty and that Britain's contribution may increase by £1 bn, Delors quipped that the British must improve their arithmetic.

The work of the Brussels Commission is enormous. In a year roughly 8,000 documents, every one in nine languages, are sent out. The Maastricht Treaty involves 282 specified regulations for the 1993 Single Market and 232 have been turned into legislation. Also hundreds of 'Directives' are sent out, one for instance on motorcycle type and parts standards. The Commission presses governments all the time to accept all of them. Britain has turned 113 of these directives into Law while 19 were turned down.

Tricks, of course, are inevitable. The Italians, for instance, are arguing that their 5% budget deficit limit must take into account their Black Market as well which means that their official 5% can be increased, without them being excluded from EMU, if it comes about. Again, the overall performance of the EC is to be seen against the findings of the official European Anti-Poverty Network. Its statistics say that 55 million of the total EC population are living below the poverty line. This line is drawn when people earn less than half the average income where they live. This means, of course, that in terms of money that line differs greatly between, say, Portugal and Denmark. This is where resentment against the Cohesion Fund comes in.

This is also where the widening of the Community and the aid to the former Soviet Republics comes in. The Germans, spending £60 billion on East Germany, want that extension not to cost them too much and Chancellor Kohl has said that the Germans will now supply knowledge rather than finance to the East. Their inflation is now hovering around 5% and the money supply has grown by around 10%. With its strikes, shooting up expenditure and government crisis Germany has ceased, for the time being at least, to be the force pushing for integration. Again, the 'convergence' of members' economies, the key feature of the Maastricht Treaty, is becoming a problem.

It seems now that the Portuguese Chairmanship was a pause due to developing circumstances that the Portuguese could not possibly influence. The British will have to face the real beginning of negotiations for the entrance of the new EFTA members now that the European Court has removed certain legal obstacles. Britain is keen on a reasonably early admission of Sweden in the first place. This is connected with the extremely sensitive issue of keeping the ERM, Exchange Rate Mechanism, going. The Germans want a steady rate of exchange because their natural preference, and chief worry, is the reconditioning of what had been East Germany. That takes priority over the need, of Britain, for instance, to lower its rate of interest. Here the admission of new members plays a role because they would also prefer a flexible exchange rate until they have adjusted. And there remain the new doubts about ratification of Maastricht and, even more, the prospect of the Delors Budget being cut significantly.

Britain, for her part, is subtly, but forthrightly, pressing for a reasonably early admission also of the Baltics, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, admission at least on the same associate basis as, say Turkey, that has now agreed to wait for full membership until the Central Asian situation is clarified.

But so much will depend on what happens to the Maastricht Treaty. If it had to be renegotiated, and as the debate progresses, more fundamental features of the Rome Treaty itself are now to be looked at, membership could be made easier. The Brussels Commission itself has shown its desire to be informal by agreeing to deal in quite a few issues directly with the regions of member countries. All 16 German Lands have offices in Brussels and Welsh and Scottish offices are being established. Spanish and Italian Provinces are also eager to deal directly with Brussels. There is more than meets the eye going on and central governments have to cope with more than expected. In effect the latest proposal by Mr. Delors to set up a new Supranational EEC-Executive has changed the whole picture and put a question mark against the present text of the Maastricht Treaty.

# GUYANA: THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE'S POOREST COUNTRY

## by Ian Christopher

GUYANESE from all walks of life are demanding political change. The 1989 and 1990 budgets of the ruling Peoples National Congress (PNC) have totally demoralised the labouring masses and undermined the economic stability of the business community.

Massive migration of labour and capital only add to the agony. The debt burden, food insecurity and unemployment are nightmares that keep Guyanese awake and horrified. The disappointment is dramatised by the massive attendance at public meetings of the political opposition.

The 1989 six-week budget strike has demonstrated a strong national solidarity irrespective of race, industry, occupation, class, location, age, sex and religion. Action on the home front has attracted external support. US Senator Edward Kennedy and several other senators and congressmen have added voices of support for the restoration of democracy in Guyana.

At the 1990 University of Guyana graduation ceremony Sir Shridath Ramphal (Secretary-General of the Commonwealth) supported the call for free and fair elections in Guyana. Guyanese abroad are anxious for free and fair elections at home. Many skilled personnel and businessmen pledge to return home and contribute to nation building when the political situation is rectified. They are committed to assist in the struggle for democracy. Former US President, Jimmy Carter, represents the eighteen-member Council of Freely Elected Governments. The Carter Centre contributed to the process of free and fair elections in Nicaragua.

In response to the external pressures and internal agitation President Desmond Hoyte has made three concessions which if implemented will result in free and fair elections. These concessions are a reformed Elections Commission, the compilation of a fair voters list and immediate count of the ballots at the place of the poll.

Brigadier Joe Singh has pledged that, under his command, the military forces will be ordered to conform to a professional role and behave in conformity with the constitution. This seems to suggest that the ballot boxes will not be seized at gun point and opposition agents will not be brutalized as in the previous elections.

The goodwill from the US and the militancy among the Guyanese people are boosted by a strong voice from Caribbean Community (Caricom) leaders. The Caribbean peoples are ahead, for they lend active solidarity to the oppressed people of Guyana. The leaders in the Caribbean are known for their frequent agitation for democracy in Haiti. With equal intensity they seem to be turning their attention to Guyana.

Latin American people are also gradually beginning to support the struggle for free and fair elections in Guyana. The Carter Centre mission of 1991 was led by a Latin-American, the Hon. Rodrigo Cerazo, who is a

former president of Costa Rica. Democracy and development are two sides of the same coin. Guyana, only two and half decades ago was seen as the bread basket of the Caribbean. Under the PNC, Guyana has been reduced to the begging bowl of the Western Hemisphere. The McIntyre report confirms that Guyana now ranks below Haiti as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

For Guyana to be an asset to the region, the people must have a government that is accountable to them, a government they can elect and recall. This fact has been recognised and hence support is being given to the realisation of democracy. However, there is a body of opinion that disagrees with the optimists.

'Free and Fair Elections Now' is a popular chant at opposition political meetings in Guyana, for it is common knowledge that all previous post-independence national elections (1968, 1973, 1980, 1985) were systematically rigged, as was the 1978 Referendum.

The People's National Congress (PNC) system of domination stands unique in the Caribbean Commonwealth and on the South American continent. It is now the only authoritarian government in that part of the world. National elections are now due in Guyana sometime in 1992.

Many are of the opinion that, even in the face of external pressures and internal agitation for political change, the PNC will not be removed from political office by this election. This pessimistic view is premised on certain rational arguments, some of which I will now outline.

Dr. Ralph Predas posited that Guyana is a multi-racial society, characterised by fragmentation along racial lines. Each race established voluntary associations to champion their respective causes. At the level of mass politics, the East Indians supported the People's Progressive Party (PPP) headed by Cheddi Jagan, an Indian, and the Africans supported the PNC headed then by Forbes Burnham, an African.

The PNC seized power in 1968, which then created an Afro-middle class elite in the military, para-military, trade unions, intelligensia, civil service, youth and state sectors that are loyal to it. This elite can be and was mobilised in the past to perpetrate fraud by force so as to steal national elections.

Free and fair elections would upset this elite. Political change, when translated for them, will mean the popular call for public acountability, leading to legal proceedings and retribution and ultimately humiliation. They will not want to be subjected to such punishment.

To avoid this, they will employ, what the one time PNC chief propagandist, Mr. Festus Brotherston Jr., called their 'specialised secret group' of riggers, and let loose what the PNC's President Desmond Hoyle refers to as their 'dogs of war' on the election day.

# LAO TZU AND MODERN WESTERN PHILOSOPHY

**by Paul St John Mackintosh**

IMAGINE that the masterpiece of one of the fathers of philosophy — say, Aristotle — has been rediscovered in a copy made only fifty years after the sage's death, leap-frogging millennia of duplication, distortion and textual corruption. Imagine that this work is one of the world's best-loved classics, translated into many languages, read by millions. Imagine further that it gives a unique perspective on some of the most urgent concerns of modern thought.

Hence the excitement when, in 1973, archaeologists found two copies of the *Lao-Tzu*, the ancient philosophical treatise, in a hoard of silk manuscripts disinterred from a Han dynasty tomb at Ma-wang-tui, southern central China. Internal evidence dated the earlier copy to 206-194 BC, only some fifty years after the work's existence is first attested and predating all extant versions by at least two centuries. Furthermore, these later variants were transmitted through countless intervening copies, with much scope for corruption.

Transcriptions of the Ma-wang-tui *Lao-Tzu* were published in China from 1974 onwards. D. C. Lau, the noted translator responsible for the Penguin Classics edition of the *Tao-Te-Ching*, published an English version in Hong Kong in 1982. Now transcriptions of both scrolls have been published, together with notes and a lucid, concise parallel translation, in a handy and cheap paperback edition (Lao-Tzu, *Te-Tao-Ching*, translated and edited by Robert G. Henricks, Rider, 1991), bringing the general reader up to date with this revolution in sinology.

The Ma-wang-tui manuscripts differ substantially in structure, though not in meaning, from the canonical editions. They are unbroken texts, without the traditional division into 81 short chapters, which must now be taken as a later editorial convention. Some passages fall in a different order to the accepted sequence. Furthermore, the two halves *(Tao* and *Te)* into which the work is usually divided are transposed, so that the *Lao-Tzu*'s other common title, *Tao-Te-Ching*, becomes *Te-Tao-Ching*. One proposed explanation is that two versions were in circulation around 200 BC; one of which commenced with the second, slightly more political section. Another is that the copyist responsible for the Ma-wang-tui texts simply switched the two parts by mistake. Overall, though, the Ma-wang-tui *Lao-Tzu* presents the same arguments as the later standard variants; only somewhat more clearly, thanks to the greater use of grammatical particles in archaic written Chinese.

What is this work, then; what does it say? It is the most popular book ever written in Chinese, almost as widely disseminated as the Bible. Its anonymous author, who lived around the third century BC, hid behind the name of Lao Tzu, a semi-mythical sage said to have instructed Confucius. It is addressed by implication to a Sage-King, although its contents range far from statecraft. The late Professor Angus Graham

called it 'a long philosophical poem or poem cycle, much of it rhymed'; he then went on to say 'The question "What is it about?" is however not necessarily any more relevant to the *Lao-Tzu* than to other poetry'. Facets of it reflect on politics, economics, strategy and technology as well as on philosophy and mysticism. Its central theme, though, is how to find and keep to the Way: the *Tao* of *Tao-Te-Ching*, a word with roughly the same meanings as the English 'way'.

The Way was the goal of all Chinese philosophical enquiry; it was the way to live. Where the Greeks asked 'How shall a man live?', the Chinese asked 'What is the Way?' As with the Greeks, the Chinese began the search for the Way in the sphere of human public life. Confucius used *Tao* to denote the proper course for the gentleman to follow through the political and social life which, again like the Greeks, he saw as fundamental to man. Central to his theme was the 'correction of names'. Names must be clarified so as to fit them properly to what they named; for discrepancies between name and named confused and misled men. So murder must be called murder, as distinct from execution or death in battle. But in the four centuries which followed, the meaning of *Tao* broadened to embrace the order of the natural world, fate and the heavens. So it was that the *Lao-Tzu* author could begin the section *Tao* by declaring:

> The Way that can be spoken is not the constant Way;
> the name that can be named is not the constant name. (1)

This opening couplet does not say that the Way cannot be put into words ('spoken' here is actually a verbal use of *Tao*, meaning 'to call/show as the Way'). It means what it says: the Way can partly be rendered into words, but that is never the whole Way, for name and named always diverge.

Already we touch on *Lao-Tzu*'s relevance to modern Western philosophy. Clearly such a dictum is antithetical to the idea of the *Logos:* the universal order embodied in logic; the Word. Yet Heidegger traced the etymology of *logos* back to a root meaning, 'collection', 'order', and in so doing demonstrated how Western thought had developed a constitutional bias towards transcendentalism: a bias defined by certain sinologists as dividing all things into oppositions of A and B in which A is felt to transcend B. Plato's ontology of the Ideas is the first step down that road, for it critically locates the *Logos* in the word, not the world, which is seen as a disorderly shadowplay obscuring a higher sphere of primary reality whose order is only clarified in language, and especially in the refined, orderly discourse of logic.

It is the reaction against what Professor Graham characterized as the Western tradition of 'seeking necessary truths by logic for some 2,000 years' which stimulates so much modern philosophy and makes the *Lao-Tzu* so pertinent. For the Chinese philosopher maintains that logic — a human enterprise — can do no more than reflect a tiny portion of a truly *universal* order of things. The most fertile fields of contemporary thought, those marked out by Heidegger and Wittgenstein, similarly are founded on the premise that Reason — as systematized by Plato and Aristotle —

cannot be the final arbiter of Truth, simply because its categories are either constitutional, or arbitrary. Heidegger especially focused his criticism on Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* — a formulation already weakened by Nietzsche's remorseless exposure of the half-dozen assumptions underpinning this supposedly necessary and self-evident truth. Heidegger took it as near blasphemy to maintain that thought could be set up as the judge of existence. Yet Descartes had only summed up in three words the gist of two millennia of Western philosophy and theology. To quote Heidegger: 'The fundamental metaphysical position of Descartes is taken over historically from the Platonic-Aristotelian metaphysics'.

Chinese thought never took this particular road. No mind/matter split ever developed in the classical Chinese world-view. The word which comes closest to 'matter' in Chinese cosmology, *chi*, originally meant breath, and defined a universal ether resembling Einsteinian mass/energy, condensing to form objects and rarefying to make up spirits; whereas the root etymology of 'matter' is the Latin word for dead wood. When the Chinese postulated paired opposites, they usually saw them as mutually defining; unlike Western dichotomies like mind/body, unextended/extended, ideal/real, where one was felt to transcend the other.

One factor shaping the evolution of Chinese thought was the Chinese language, 'perhaps nearer to symbolic logic than any other language' (Graham). All surviving philosophical traditions, except for those in the Chinese ambit, have evolved in or been influenced by Indo-European cultures. Therefore, all philosophies except the Chinese have been affected by such oddities as the confusion, in Indo-European tongues, of existence with essence: the '*that* it is' of a thing with the '*what* it is' exhibited in the copulative relation 'this cat *is* black'. Plato, falling into this trap, declared that if X *is* lighter than Y therefore X *is*. The Indo-European copula is a displacement of the existential 'is' to fill a space in sentences which grammatically require a main verb but logically do not. In Chinese, the essence of a thing, its *ch'ing*, is that which makes its name fit it; it has no other relation to being *per se*. Even Plato devised a similar definition: Socrates says in the *Theaetetus*, 'everything that exists in its own right can only be *named*, no other determination is possible, neither that it is nor that it is not'. Yet it took Aristotle to disentangle Plato's confusion of essence with existence — which can only be rendered into Chinese *at all* by new coinages made far vaguer than their native equivalents. Heidegger located the first 'forgetting of Being', which he regarded as critical to the subsequent intellectual position of the West, in the grammar of the Homeric *eon*, which could represent either the infinitive of the verb 'to be', or a transcendent entity, a supreme being.

Another built-in safeguard in Chinese philosophical language is the behaviour of nominalized verbs. The English 'Meaning' — or any similarly nominalized entity — takes on a life of its own thanks to the change in form from the verb which sired it: a third term appears midway between 'A word' and 'means', an entity often assimilated to the transcendent realm

of Pure Forms. In Chinese, a verb standing in a nominal position does not change form: no third entity is created.

A broader basis for the stance which led to *Lao-Tzu* has recently been distinguished by sinologists: that the Western world-view tends to begin with parts and add these up into a whole; whereas the Chinese start with the whole and then divide down. This process of division is associated by the Chinese with naming; making distinctions; delineating categories. By unlearning such differentiations one could, in theory, work back to an unmediated apprehension of a primal unity: the Way; the Uncarved Block of Taoist terminology. Opposites, demarcations, even right and wrong, all hide and detract from the Way:

> The common people discriminate and make fine distinctions;
> I alone am muddled and confused.
> Formless am I! Like the ocean (20)

One finds the Way by suspending the operation of distinctions, names — even the name 'Way' which itself equally obscures:

> It can be regarded as the mother of Heaven and Earth.
> I do not yet know its name;
> I 'style' it 'the Way' (25)

Wittgenstein approached such a position in eschewing saying for showing, in locating truth in what *was* rather than what could be *said*. Similarly, Heidegger exalted the wordless skill with which a craftsman appropriates the ready-to-hand, and dismantled the verbal constructs — often worked up from incorrect transpositions from the Greek — that shored Western thought. Derrida followed this lead in reversing the usual oppositions within the Western tradition; as in the *Lao-Tzu:*

> The purest white appears to be soiled (41)

All this might be merely scholarly diversion, save that it has more immediate point. Questions of being, meaning and truth in a modern Western context embrace issues of values, ethics, and in particular the crisis of the 'devaluation of all values' identified by Nietzsche. Descartes' starting question, 'How do I know I exist?', remained unanswered by Descartes or anyone else in a manner that could ensure certainty for the extended world. 'Through Descartes, realism is first put in the position of having to prove the reality of the outer world' (Heidegger). Once again we see why Wittgenstein insisted on showing, not saying; on the importance of philosophy *unlearning* such questions, whose conceptual sleight of hand is hidden by grammatical plausibility. While Cartesian faith in Reason remained unchallenged, all truths, including moral verities, were held to inhere in the realm of the unextended, not in the contingent outer world. Truth remained not a matter of demonstration, but of sustained faith in the argument from the *cogito*.

Furthermore, Cartesianism armed this world-denying doubt with the fruits of technological progress. Once again, Heidegger: 'Machine technology remains up to now the most visible outgrowth of the essence of modern technology, which is identical with the essence of modern metaphysics'. Cartesianism stressed the *calculable:* that part of existence which

could be determined by the mathematical laws which had become the creed's sole criterion of truth. This stress provoked many — not least Descartes — to enormously extend man's ability to calculate. Up until around the seventeenth century, Chinese mathematics and technology had been far in advance of the West, owing in part to a Taoist openness to phenomena. Cartesianism reinforced the Christian concept of a material world subject to a rational soul, and in so doing liberated the Western mind from moral inhibition of enquiry at the same time as it furnished both means and motive for such enquiry: and the West leapt ahead.

Yet the flaws in the Cartesian world-view, unhealed, have now grown into fissures in Western culture that have already almost brought it crashing down. The incalculable, which soon turned out to include the moral and political arts that regulate human community, has been relegated for centuries to the status of fiction. Moral and political thought in the West have yet to match the astonishing development of science and technology: if anything, they have regressed to the materialism, reductionism and rank nihilism so prevalent throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Furthermore, Descartes, who had invoked Reason to prove the necessity of God, ended by requiring God to sustain Reason. That is, the Platonic structure inherent in Cartesianism required that transcendent realm identified with God, and as faith in its existence declined, so did faith in Reason, Truth and the Good. Kant was only the first to demand that Reason should derive its truth not from its own order but from the world. Today, the sciences nurtured by Cartesianism have spawned relativity, quantum uncertainty, chaos theory: all of them inimical to the goal of a completely calculable cosmos posited by Descartes and embodying principles of paradox and uncertainty quite alien to the traditional form of Reason.

Ethics and politics in the West are still unregenerate. Nationalism, Communism, fascism, and other ideologies have convulsed Europe for two centuries. In each case, the creed carries over procedures of faith, of self-consistency, of ultimate ends that override lesser goods, characteristic of the transcendental bias of both Christianity and the moral ideals beloved of Western philosophers. The habit of belief, of crediting particular ideas, has become so ingrained that men are willing to go to any extreme rather than face the nihilism which appears to be the only alternative. Furthermore, the current calm in these waters is simply that of exhaustion: the tides still flow. The second Holocaust — or the final Revolution, call it what you will — has only been postponed.

If this is a genuine problem, what might a solution look like? *Lao-Tzu* is one model, a way of thought freed from the constituent weaknesses of our Western culture. Yet one need not abandon oneself to Chinese philosophy, however valuable the perspective it affords on our own. The Western tradition has the vitality to regenerate itself. Take, for instance, Wittgenstein's conclusion to his thoughts on how to gauge the genuineness of expressions of feeling: 'What one acquires here is not a technique: one learns correct judgements. There are also rules, but they do not form

a system and only experienced people can apply them right. Unlike calculating-rules'. Or, to quote a recent review in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 'human affairs can be at best *understood*, and never "explained", in the sense given to that term by philosophers of science... Success in history and the social sciences alike "consists in understanding more and knowing less".' And Heidegger's conclusion, arrived at via thought processes which constantly employed metaphors of the path, or the trail, was *Alles ist Weg* ('all is the way, or wayfaring').

Let Professor Graham have the last word on *Lao-Tzu:* 'Perhaps *Lao-Tzu*'s Way is how [truth] will look to us when we are no longer haunted by the ghost of that transcendent Reality'. Not that the book offers *answers:* seeking absolute answers is one bad habit that the West is learning to break. Rather, it opens one's mind to the right questions. For this reason, it is a timely work, and the Ma-wang-tui texts are a timely discovery. We are lucky to live in such times.

## POEM

### TRANSFORMATION

Sitting in the garden
Trying to *be* the garden,
Absorbing the sun
Reflected from red brick walls,
While pale green lettuce plants
Send cool moistness
To dry, overheated eyes,
And the scent of thyme
Tingles, tickles the nose.
A white, hollow snail-shell,
Upended, rocks in the breeze
Caused by a fierce sparrow
Burrowing in a dust-bath.
The garden gate's paint,
Faded blue, is cracked
And peeled in patterned angles,
Seeming somehow important
With their small black shadows.
The hot, heavy, scented air
Slows thought and breaths,
Making *being* an effort —
It's much easier to doze...

Elizabeth Hillman

# WILD HORSES IN ENGLAND: WILL THE DARTMOOR PONY SURVIVE?

## by Joachim Krautz

ON the southwestern tip of England, in the county of Devon only a few miles from the sea, lies one of her dreariest and, even today, most deserted landscapes: the highlands of Dartmoor. Its core between Okehampton and Ivybridge, covering an area of approximately 400 square miles, lies at an altitude between 1,000 and 1,800 feet. Even before prehistoric man arrived there in about 3,000 B.C., the rugged climate had helped an indigenous race of sturdy ponies emerge to roam the forests and moors.

As early as the Bronze Age people settling in the sheltered valleys used to drive their livestock up into the moor. Written records of a unique Dartmoor pony breed date back to 1012. But like their wild ancestors the herds were still kept by peasants on the moor throughout the year only to be rounded up annually in autumn. This practice in combination with Dartmoor's harsh weather conditions — particularly during the winter — ensured the survival of the fittest only. Life on a rough, unfriendly terrain full of boulders and steep hillsides and with countless rivers and streams to cross endowed the pony with a steady step. Its low sure-footed action, its hardiness and its good temperament made the Dartmoor pony an ideal companion to the medieval tin miner as well as to the farmer on the moor up to the turn of the century.

Keeping virtually wild pony herds on common pastures and selecting those animals designated for use during an annual drift was not limited to the highlands of Dartmoor. It became a widespread practice all over the British Isles once man had taken up domesticating horses. Over numerous centuries the herds have been gradually driven back into remoter and bleaker regions of the country owing to an increase in cultivating and enclosing land. This has led to the evolution of different breeds best adapted to their own areas.

In 1898, the British Polo Pony Society, today the National Pony Society, was founded with the objective to establish standard descriptions for each native breed of pony. Their description of the Dartmoor pony parallels the modern one except in height limits. Today the pony's measure is not to exceed 12 hands 2 inches and its proper colours are bay, brown, black, grey and dark chestnut. Its head is small with tiny alert ears. Its hindquarters are strong while its hooves are tough and well-shaped.

One could imagine that the establishment of standard descriptions for a breed ensures its continuance. But in the case of the Dartmoor pony it brought on the contrary. Mrs. Freda Wilkinson, a lady who has bred ponies on the moor for 50-odd years says: 'The blight of the Dartmoor began in the 1890s when the "pure-breed" ponies were bred for special purposes. First they were to serve as polo ponies — that was when the

height limit was still 14 hands. Later the market demanded children's riding ponies of a smaller size that would win prizes in the show ring. Of course registered pure-breeds were too valuable to be kept on the moor anymore. And after crossing them with other breeds they were no longer hardy enough, either'.

In the early twentieth century the introduction of technology in agriculture and the construction of new roads through the moor made many farmers abandon their time-honoured companion as a means of transportation and a beast of burden. But in the Welsh collieries there was a growing demand for pit-ponies. In the 1940s the Dartmoor farmers started to crossbreed Shetland ponies with their native ones to produce smaller ponies with heavier heads — so they would keep them down in the coal-mines. The Shetland inbreeds, however, caused disastrous results: the ponies were ugly with short heads and poor bones. This led to more attempts at outcrossing using other breeds including Arabs and Exmoor ponies.

Relentless crossbreeding soon endangered the very continuance of the Dartmoor pony. By the mid-century farmers started to sell ponies to be butchered for the horsemeat markets in Italy and France. For this practice nobody cared about standard descriptions anymore. The going price for horsemeat on the continent, however, was far from spectacular. Rising farm expenses put the Dartmoor farmer himself on the list of endangered species. Furthermore, government subsidies were only granted for sheep and cattle grazing and not for keeping ponies. This did not exactly encourage those farmers who stayed in business to increase their herds. As a result the number of ponies roaming the moors dwindled from about 30,000 in 1950 to less than 5,000 in the early 1980s. Moreover, the piebald and skewbald colour of many of the remaining animals betrayed their Shetland ancestors.

When hardly any native ponies could be spotted on the moor anymore British traditionalists protested. In 1982 the ponies of Dartmoor received a great deal of publicity in the media. A horse-loving nation reacted with indignation to the number of road casualties as well as to the fact that most of the animals were sold for slaughter. Still more concern was raised about the threat of one of Britain's oldest and toughest pony-breeds vanishing from the moor altogether. The Dartmoor National Park Authority and the Dartmoor Pony Society combined their efforts to set up two programmes with the aim of ensuring the survival of the Dartmoor pony on the moor.

Yet all the while people kept breeding registered Dartmoor ponies. Elizabeth Newbolt-Young, for example, an energetic pony enthusiast in her late forties, has been breeding ponies for almost 30 years. She has turned her thirteenth century cottage near Widecombe-in-the-Moor into a successful stud farm — the Shilstone Rocks Stud Farm — with an adjoining riding stable. While the latter is run by her husband and her children she is in charge of the breeding business. The walls in her kitchen, made short by the low ceiling which characterizes medieval houses, are covered

with the prizes she has won for her pure-breeds and for paintings of her most cherished stallions. As she brews a cup of tea for her visitors over the crackling fire in the Aga, that kitchen wood-stove from the nineteenth century, Mrs. Newbolt-Young explains the difference between the two mentioned programmes.

The Dartmoor Moorland Pony Scheme was started in 1987. It is run by the Dartmoor Pony Society and therefore it comes as no surprise that it focusses on the pedigree ponies only. The principle actions have been to set up a breeding herd of Dartmoor ponies, to compile a register of pure bred stock, to aid a breeding programme and to subsidize the keeping of pure-breeds. The second programme is the Dartmoor Pony Support Scheme which began in 1988. Its objective is to bring back the Dartmoor pony as the sole pony roaming the moors. This of course means that the farmers have to be persuaded, little by little, to sell their Shetlands and mongrels. Many are willing to co-operate but, as Mrs. Newbolt-Young admits with a twinkle in her eye, 'these fellows are as tough as the climate of the moor'. On the whole, the proud owner of five pure-bred stallions who keeps a small herd in an enclosure on the moor is optimistic about the future of the Dartmoor pony. She is a firm supporter of both programmes. 'After all,' she says, 'the original native ponies are the best-adapted to this habitat. The only problem with our pure-breeds is that most of them go back to one stallion. But this genetic weakness has been overcome by outcrossing them with other blood lines, that is to say with mares from the few stud farms abroad where Dartmoor ponies are bred'.

Elizabeth Newbolt-Young represents the opinion of the breeders of registered ponies. She did not mention, however, that the stallion, 'The Leat' — the famous Dartmoor foundation sire — had hardly any Dartmoor blood at all — he was three quarters Arab. 'Nevertheless, is The Leat', as Freda Wilkinson bitterly points out, 'an ancestor of practically every "pure" Dartmoor seen in the showring today?' As a Dartmoor farmer her views with regard to the so-called 'original' native ponies on the moor differ from those of the Dartmoor Pony Society. The farmers accuse the DPS of treating them unfairly by denigrating them and their ponies in order to justify inflated prices for their own pure-breeds.

What infuriates her most is the fact that 'as long as the stud book is open any desired strains are readily admitted, even — as in the case of The Leat — animals of a completely different breed. Once the stud book is closed all non-registered animals are denounced as "mongrels". But for us farmers a real Dartmoor — besides conforming to breed standards with regard to its appearance — must above all be hardy enough to live and thrive on the open moor in an average winter without additional feeding'.

Precisely this ability is now the prerequisite for eligibility for subsidies by the Dartmoor Pony Support Scheme. The payment amounts to £30 per annum per mare on up to 20 mares. Only commoners are eligible, i.e. people with a right to graze animals on the common land of Dartmoor. Inspections of the ponies on the moor take place in January. So far the

scheme has been successful. The number of Dartmoor ponies fit for survival on the moor is increasing year by year. In 1989 subsidies were paid for 608 mares. By 1991 this number has risen to 807.

In addition to the support scheme the public demand for coloured riding and driving ponies has declined. Parents again appreciate the good temperament of their children's ponies more than anything else. This means better chances for Dartmoor ponies on the market. But although the number of Dartmoors has increased, the overall number of ponies on the moor has stagnated at about 3,000 heads.

To Ivan Fincham, a retired veterinarian who knows the moors like the back of his hand, this stagnation is not a problem at all. 'Out here at least two thirds of all the ponies are very "Dartmoorish". The question is: for what reason does one want to have the original breed back on the moor? Simply preserving an endangered breed or keeping alive a traditional expertise is no argument for the farmers. They have to make both ends meet'.

As he is neither a breeder nor a keeper of ponies, Ivan Fincham holds a more detached opinion on the subject. But he, too, is optimistic. The rising demand for Dartmoors as riding ponies, he thinks, will ensure, in the long run, the survival of the breed. 'We will have a situation where all the ponies on the moor — the "wild ones" — will be very Dartmoorish. And the expensive pedigree ponies will be kept in the enclosures'.

Mr. Fincham views the farmers' unwillingness to keep as many ponies on the moor as they used to as more fortunate than alarming. A smaller number of grazing animals is better for the ecological balance of the moor. 'This wild landscape has been shaped by grazing animals over millennia. But its ecology is extremely sensitive. The animals usually follow their trodden paths and do not afflict much damage to the environment. The additional immense increase of tourists visiting the moor every summer, however, is more than it can take. Erosion of its habitat is the real threat to our moorland pony. If we manage to save the moor we have won the battle for the survival of the Dartmoor pony'.

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[Joachim Krautz is a German writer based in Stuttgart.]

# MY AMERICAN DREAMS

## by Eric Glasgow

I grew up, as a Cambridge undergraduate, under the wartime influences of the Anglo-American alliance. Previously, in my schooldays in Lancashire, I had had very few contacts with either American culture or American literature. I can remember my early reading of the novels of James Fenimore Cooper, especially his *The Last of the Mohicans*, and I did like the poetry of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, especially his 'Wreck of the Hesperus' and 'Song of Hiawatha'. But I left school, in 1942, fairly ignorant of the riches of the American literature, as likewise of the nature and the relevance of the American history, especially in its post-Colonial varieties. It took the exigencies, and the expectations, of my Cambridge years (1942-45) to acquaint me, in any depth, with either history or literature, as far as the USA was concerned. Wartime Cambridge was severely attenuated by shortages of senior staff and research facilities. All new appointments to College Fellowships were suspended 'for the duration' (in order not to prejudice in that crucial respect able men who were doing their bit for the country, often in remote or perilous locations). But that did mean, for the few who could continue 'in residence', that the incentive for the highest academic distinctions was temporarily swept aside, and for the most part, we went on our legitimate ways, in libraries and lecture halls, thinking far more of the past than of the future, which seemed then mostly to be vague and indefinitive.

At any rate, while I was at Cambridge, I experienced the tail-end of an era of somewhat exclusive privilege, before the deluge of hard-working competition, that came after the war had ended in 1945. Cambridge, in my youth, was encompassed by many American airfields, from which nightly we could hear the planes leaving to bomb Germany, across the level tracts of East Anglia. I have now to confess that as a student I did not bother much about such errands of death and destruction. I was too intent upon my bookish studies, and I was too immature to understand fully what it all meant in human or even international terms. But, even as then — sanguine and hopeful — I trod those impressionable Cambridge streets, I could not fail to notice the American sightseers, marvelling at the beauty of the Colleges, and often contrasting their cloisters with the singularity, back home, of such American institutions as Harvard, Yale, Johns Hopkins, or Columbia. I caught from them the nuances of the American accents (scarcely at all to be attained then in my own Northern England). So I took quite naturally, as a duck might take to water, the introduction at Cambridge in 1943 of American studies, as an integral part of the Historical Tripos. I was among the very first Cambridge undergraduates to study American history as part of the Degree Course.

At first — as now I may remember — Cambridge was short of necessary knowledge and talent in that respect. We had to import — across the then perilous North Atlantic Ocean — suitable teachers from the USA. It was

just about the time that the Oxford University Press published, as a pioneering work, *America—The Story of a Free People*, by Allan Nevins and Henry Steele Commager. Cambridge wanted the former from New York. He sent instead, as an able and effective substitute, his colleague, Henry Steele Commager, from Columbia University. It was from him that I began my studies in American history. I visited him often in his rooms at Emmanuel College. He was both learned and stimulating, if rather intimidating for an unpractised youth. But he did not stay with us for very long, and for my second year of American studies we had a Professor from Texas, Frank Dobie, who subsequently wrote an entertaining if not very profound book about his experiences. He was very entertaining to talk with, but I scarcely missed him at all when fairly soon he was back in Texas. That was at Easter in 1944. Once again, therefore, for the crucial summer term, we were left without an American teacher. E. A. Benians, Master of St. John's College, stepped in to fill that gap; although he was a very different type from either of his two American predecessors. I attended his lectures on American history, published shortly afterwards by the University Press under the title of *The United States—An Historical Sketch*. This is not an exciting book; but it is a very meritorious and profound book, to which I can still return, even after fifty years, with both benefit and admiration. In those years, of course, American studies at Cambridge were very much of an innovation. Only gradually was the available literature about them amplified: as with J. T. Adams *The Epic of America* (1945) and Frank Thistlewaite *The Great Experiment* (1961). But even my somewhat tentative incursions into American history at Cambridge, within the period 1942-45, left me with an indelible interest in the subject, and a new consciousness of the links binding together the two Anglo-Saxon countries of the Northern hemisphere. I have never since lost my interest in things American: despite so many other preoccupations in the intervening years.

It must, therefore, be to Cambridge that I assign, among other intangible benefits, my youthful encounters with the USA, albeit through books and at a distance. So it has always and inevitably remained: today, in the retirement stage, I still see America in the detached and vicarious terms of academic studies and the exchange of ideas, whether literary or historical; and I am optimistic enough to continue to assume that such bookish notions can be as trustworthy and as invaluable as any concourse of direct or personal experiences or contacts. If, at Cambridge in my times, the USA was new as an academic pursuit, it had long been frequented by scholars of lucrative lecture tours: M. P. Charlesworth went there to lecture on Roman History, T. R. Glover went there to lecture on Virgil and Horace, and G. G. Coulton went there to lecture on Europe in the Middle Ages. But, until my times, American history was never systematically studied at Cambridge, at the undergraduate levels.

The Churchillian touch, of course, in wartime England, promoted American studies. All of us remember Churchill's quotation 'Westward,

look the land is bright,' taken from 'Say not the struggle naught availeth' by the Liverpool-born poet, Arthur Hugh Clough, who — like so many of the 'Eminent Victorians' — spent quite a lot of time in America. Churchill himself was still to be engaged with his magnificent *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, fortifying and amplifying the solidarity of ideas and intentions between the two great Anglo-Saxon democracies. I read this when it came out, marvelling at its lucidity and its comprehensiveness. Although, while I was necessarily immersed in the chores of school-teaching, I did not have much time for vacations of the spirit, or expansions of the mind and the imagination, possibly reaching even to America, I nevertheless kept stored in my innermost heart the rudiments of the 'American Dream' — of political freedom, racial tolerance, and vast, unspoilt horizons — which were ready to be re-awakened as and when the opportunity might arise.

That was for me mostly to come when, at or approaching retirement, my own researches, even in England, brought me into some renewed contacts with the 'American Dream'. Liverpool, for example — adjacent to my home — reminded me of its importance as a port of exit or entry for countless Americans over the years. I thought, too, of Charles Dickens, making his first American tour, during the first half of 1842. He went from Liverpool in the steam-ship *Britannia*. He landed at Boston, having had an unpleasant and tempestuous voyage. From there, he went on to New York, to meet Washington Irving. In Washington, he met John Quincy Adams. He even visited the Mississippi, the 'Father of Waters', although to him it seemed then to be 'a slimy monster hideous to behold'. America, for Dickens, was epitomized as 'God's Crucible, the great Melting Pot'. His *American Notes*, summarizing his observations, came out later in 1842, annoying many Americans as a 'caricature', although the book sold quite well, on both sides of the Atlantic. Dickens never really understood the Americans, perhaps confused by the fact that — ostensibly at least — the same language was used and spoken on both sides of the Atlantic. As Bernard Shaw was later to affirm, 'Britain and America are two nations, divided by the same language'.

Another of my American links — also largely based on Liverpool — came with my interest in Nathaniel Hawthorne. He already had a very considerable literary reputation — based on such novels as *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables* before his appointment as the American Consul in Liverpool (1853-57). His local connections with Merseyside, however, became authentic and apparent for me as soon as I discovered that he was a Southport resident for ten months in 1856-7. For my own home-town, therefore, he has left us with invaluable descriptions, in his copious and varied *English Note Books*, of such of its salient features as the extensive beach, the sand-yachts, the lodging-houses, and the promenade of the central Lord Street. Hawthorne, therefore, is still very much a part of the records of early Victorian Southport. Here, too — nestling among the congenial sandhills — Hawthorne met his fellow-American, Herman Melville — author of *Moby Dick* — on 12 November,

1856, while the latter was en route for an extensive European tour. The two Americans, temporarily encompassed within the sandhills of homely Southport, talked of 'providence and futurity, and of everything that lies beyond human ken . . . He can neither believe, nor be comfortable in his unbelief; and he is too honest and courageous not to try to do one or the other'.

So, if I did not go to America (as my grandfather sometimes threatened to do, a lingering vestige of a long-remembered Victorian hope and aspiration, for a better land, of supposed fortune and opportunity), I did induce America somehow and sometimes to come to me: in terms of both literature and history (local and regional, as well as national). Liverpool, of course, far more than Southport, contained within its local history far more of America and it was also more obvious, varied, and accessible. The trans-Atlantic link, between Liverpool and New York, was extraordinarily formative in the making of Victorian Liverpool. Liverpool was historically the great point of entry and exit for the American traffic; and so it remained until the end of the War of 1939-45. So, the more in recent years I have studied Liverpool's history, the more I have become fortified in my interest in American life, character, and history, so reviving a propensity to look across the Atlantic Ocean, which began for me as an undergraduate fifty years ago at Cambridge.

Nowadays, well beyond retirement age, I still occasionally dream of trans-Atlantic studies — at Harvard, Chicago, or in California. My friend, A. L. Rowse, has sometimes animated my concerns with the Henry E. Huntington Library at San Marino, California, as with his book *A Cornishman Abroad*. I do know that such American institutions — vast and beckoning — often contain resources for both historical and literary research — even about Tudor or Stuart England; Victorian studies or Modern English literature — lacking even at Oxford or Cambridge, such is the power of the 'American dollar'. Theodore Stephanides — mentor of the Durrells in the unspoilt Corfu of the 1930s — confided in me during his London retirement that he had deposited a lot of his unpublished writings, mostly about the Modern Greek literature, in the 'Humanities Centre' of the University of Texas, for the use of posterity. That is far outside my scope and range. On the other hand, in recent years, I have contributed to *Victorians Institute Journal*, produced by the University of East Carolina, USA, with the prospect, after 1992, of a regular feature in that prestigious publication, devoted to 'obscure or otherwise little known Victorian celebrities', thanks to the appreciative help of Professor Donald Lawler. Alas, however, I have had less luck with my offered contributions to some other American academic journals; such as those of Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, and the University of Chicago. In such cases, as it seems, the battle groups of the American academic establishment have been too much for me: I am an outsider or a dilettante, remote from the massive resources of the American libraries and research centres.

Indeed, it has been essentially by means of correspondence that, since 1945, I have preserved and extended my American links. I see from my

own records — preserved beaver-like over the years — that the University of Utah in 1973 consulted me about the local childhood of the Oxford historian, A. J. P. Taylor, with whom in his adult life I had some amiable and informative contacts, culminating in my publication of a sketch of his 'Birkdale Boyhood' in a regional magazine, which must somehow have found its way to America. A. J. P. Taylor — my American correspondent in 1973 concluded — in retrospect saw the academic 'leftism' of the 1930s as altogether unrealistic and misguided (much as his contemporary and friend, A. L. Rowse, has also done). I was only a boy in Southport in those years: innocent of anything as adult and mature as interests in either politics or public life; so I can neither confirm nor deny what other and older academics have thought and written about that.

Thanks to the timely generosity of St. John's College, I was back in Cambridge, doing research, during the two successive summers of 1982 and 1983. Among the themes that I researched was the life of John Harvard (1607-1638), which again renewed my insights into the beginnings of Puritanism — particularly its extraordinary resilience in matters of books and literature, in the context of primitive danger and penury — in New England. Although John Harvard was not exactly the founder of the College which is named after him, he bequeathed to it, after his death in 1638, his library of some four hundred volumes — painfully carried with him across the Atlantic — and half of his estate, which was valued in gross at about £1,700. A New England contemporary summed up what it matters to know of him: 'The man was a Scholler in his life and enlarged toward the country and the good of it in life and death'. For me, at any rate — labouring in the Cambridge University Library a decade ago — John Harvard, and his trans-Atlantic quest, emerged as peculiarly evocative of all that I had ever learnt about the Anglo-American links, even in the distant years of Colonialism, and the harsh and divisive consequences of religious intolerance in the early Stuart England.

Of course, Britain and America have had a long and fruitful history of alliance as well as of conflict; of harmony as well as discord. It is a mistake to equate or identify the two. Frequent visitors to the New World are far less likely to fall into that fatal error than folk who, like myself, must be contented with encounters with America that are distinctively vicarious, bookish, and detached. Nevertheless, even for the elderly, there are discernible benefits to my own kinds of American links: armchair, secluded and literary. Perhaps, in such circumstances — imposed upon us by age or infirmity — we are able and encouraged to see America in greater detachment; to envisage its immense diversity in serene and global settings, immune to all the distractions of its current commercialism, speed and secularism. After all, the American Dream is as much to be sampled in terms of both literature and history, as in terms of fast food, drugs, skyscrapers and sleek cars.

# SANTAYANA: A PROPHET OF OUR TIME

## by A. L. Rowse

AS against the many false prophets of our time, as superficial as they are vulgar, there stands out one whose analysis of the age and forecast of the way things have been and are going have been proved by events to be more correct and deeper in insight than anyone else. This is the philosopher George Santayana.

It is the less surprising in that he was a pure Spaniard, who was trained and professed philosophy for many years at Harvard — though he preferred Oxford and to spend the rest of his life as a wandering scholar observing and diagnosing society all round Europe. So we should align him with those independent Spanish thinkers, Unamono and Ortega y Gasset, not with Anglo-Saxons like William James or Bertrand Russell, of whom however he was a friend. Thus Santayana's view of the world, its peoples and ways, is singularly objective and ecumenical, outside of any national or sectarian prejudice. His insights are all the more penetrating. He defined intelligence as the power to see things as they are; few have it, but no one ever lived up to it more completely, or expressed it so fully in philosophic and social thought, in literature, or again on art.

Santayana was a citizen of the world, though he liked living best in Paris or Oxford, in England (except for the climate) or Italy. He observed national characteristics sympathetically from the outside. Though a philosopher, he regarded various peoples' philosophies as, rather, expressions of their inner characters. For example, English empiricism, American pragmatism, French rationalism, German philosophic 'Idealism'. He had great respect for the Catholic tradition, and also for Indian philosophy.

What is remarkable about him is how right he was, how *vorsichtig*, decades before other people foresaw the dangers impending — on Nationalism, for example. Before 1914, when there was something of a common European civilisation, Santayana diagnosed: 'Nationalism has become an omnivorous, all-permeating passion. Local parliaments must be everywhere established, extinct or provincial dialects must be galvanised into national languages, religion must be fostered where it emphasises nationality'.

What he observed at the beginning of our century — Santayana rightly calls it 'this catastrophic century' — is still more true of the end of it. Not only the assertiveness of small nationalisms, but in religion the revival of Russian Othodoxy, Polish Catholicism, Islamic Fundamentalism in Iran, and elsewhere, Hindu Fundamentalism in India. Here Santayana's diagnosis was much truer to the facts than was the contemptuous refusal of Marxism to recognise nationalism in theory or practice. This was understandable in a cosmopolitan Jew like Marx, though himself an obvious expression of dual German and Jewish characteristics.

Santayana remarked that a factor in the assertiveness of nationalism is that people feel it the only distinction they have left in a demotic equalising world. I have noticed something of that in the inferiority-complex of the

little people pushing Cornish nationalism. On a far larger scale I remember a Czech in the dreadful 1930s observing, 'Ein Deutscher ist dreimal Deutsch'.

Santayana diagnosed the essence of *Deutschtum*, the character of its spirit, in his remarkable book, *Egotism in German Philosophy*, long before its explosion, in the more appalling circumstances of a demotic age, in Nazism. He begins with a proper distinction between Egotism and Egoism. Egoism is the natural concern of every creature in and for himself or itself. Egotism is the deliberate cult of 'subjectivity in philosophy and wilfulness in morals, which is the soul of German philosophy'. He follows this up with a diagnosis— simply astonishing before 1914 — of what was the trouble in the German soul:

> The transcendental theory of a world merely imagined by the ego, and the will that deems itself absolute, are certainly desperate delusions... The thing bears all the marks of a new religion. The fact that the established religions of Germany are still forms of Christianity may obscure the explicit and heathen character of the new faith: it passes for the faith of a few extremists, when in reality it dominates the judgment and conduct of the nation. It has its prophets in the great philosophers and historians of the last century; its high priests and pharisees in the Government and the professors; its faithful flock in the disciplined mass of the nation; its heretics in the Socialists; its dupes in the Catholics and the Liberals, to both of whom, if they understood it, the national creed would be an abomination. It has its martyrs now by the million, for its victims, in some degree, are all men.

That was written amid the holocaust of the First World War, which decimated the upper classes in Britain, still more in France, devitalised by it for a whole generation. It is extraordinary that this philosophic observer should have seen through the trappings of the comparatively respectable Kaiser's Germany, if military and aggressive, to the real motor-force within, the drive to dominate Europe.

Santayana could read the purpose behind it all. Twenty years later, in September 1939, he saw, 'this Second German War is expected to settle again what was supposed to be settled for ever by the First, and to settle it in exactly the same way', i.e. the German domination of Europe by force. And by the same creed as he had analysed before, only vulgarised by Hitler for a demotic society, brought out into the light of day and rendered all the more effective for the credulous masses.

There it all was, the superiority of the *Herrenvolk*, racialism and all. The philosophers Fichte and Hegel had told the German people modestly that they were 'called by Providence to occupy the supreme place in the history of the universe'. At Christmas 1940 the Nazi leader Frank, called by Providence to exterminate Jews and Poles in Poland, broadcast the message in clearer personal terms: 'God's greatest gift to man is to have been born a German'. However, though Santayana diagnosed the diabolism in their philosophy, he did not foresee — no one could have foreseen — the

consequences in the maniac determination to exterminate a whole people, the ancient Jews of Europe.

In fact no one would take notice of Santayana's precise and prophetic warnings: he tells us that this book of his was 'totally neglected'. Several times, in those dreadful years of the run-up to the second German attempt, I tried to draw attention to the book as essential reading. All in vain: no one wanted to hear. In intellectual circles, as in financial and political, a definite, if bemused, pro-Germanism prevailed. A politically detached observer, Lord Clark, bears witness to it. When studying in Dresden he observed (as I did in Munich) that 'the industry and docility of this marvellous people was already directed to a destructive end. Why didn't everyone recognise it?' The murder campaign of June 1934, early in Hitler's regime, should have told them its nature; 'but this, and the subsequent horrors, seemed to make no impression at all on these rich, respectable men'. When Clark 'ventured to mention them' to Mr. Chamberlain, 'All propaganda', he replied. Neither he, nor any member of his Cabinet, had read *Mein Kampf*. This offered not only a guide to what Hitler intended, but may be regarded as a vulgar text by an autodidact of genius summarising the consequences of the egotistic tradition of German philosophy.

We do not need to go into the detailed philosophic tenets—Santayana does that for us. We need note only the contemptuous dismissal of other peoples' thought. Locke, for example, most characteristic of English thinkers in his common-sense and moderation, is dismissed by Fichte as 'the worst of philosophers'. *Freiheit* to him meant freedom from restraint, to impose their will on others. Will is supreme; German Idealist philosophy is a transcendent inner dream of what the world is like (as in fact it is not!), which the enormous energy of that 'marvellous people' then imposes upon the unfortunate external world. 'And how should these fables [of racialism etc.] seem plausible unless they expressed something congruous with the people's heart?' Santayana notes, not without sympathy, the tragic element in it—in its most explicit exponent, Schopenhauer, when it breaks or when the true facts of the external universe break it (as in 1945), 'he wilfully invites the Will to abolish itself and extinguish the world'. We can recognise here Hitler's abnormal will, his constant emphasis upon it; and when it fails the calling down of *Götterdämmerung* upon the ruins of the appalling dream.

Hitler's criminal world was some decades away from the respected (if not wholly respectable) world of Hegel, Bismarck and Treitschke, with his 'hysterical hatred of England', as Santayana describes it. It was inspired of course by envy. (Alas, no reason for that today.) Fichte held that it was Germany's rôle to lead the world into the next age. Something in that came true—ironically, for we may say that the resort to force with their two wars speeded up the processes of history and set in motion the terrorism and violence, the massacres and holocausts, that have become characteristic of the twentieth century.

Santayana regarded 'democracy' as characteristic of our century. We

may describe it more precisely as the coming of the masses to the forefront of society, politics, 'culture', everywhere and in every field. 'Our whole life and mind is saturated with the slow upward filtration of a new spirit — that of an emancipated, atheistic, international democracy.' He was writing that before 1914, when the movement may have been slow; it has become faster since: emancipation has become anarchy, for everywhere the masses are out of hand, amid social and moral breakdown. Of the early stages he says, 'in vain do we deprecate it; it has possession of us already through our propensities, fashions, and language. Our very plutocrats and monarchs are at ease only when they are *vulgar*'.

It was odd that revolutions, 'so destructive, stupid, and bloody, should be prompted by theories concerning inevitable progress in the world'. At this moment we are seeing that reflection borne out by the breakdown of the promise of 'progress' — the most outrageous experiment in social engineering — announced by Lenin's Revolution of 1917. The historian may reflect how much more real progress Russia would have achieved if it had never taken place.

As for progress, Santayana diagnosed even then, 'in the fine arts, in religion and philosophy, we are in full career towards *disintegration*'. The process has gone much further since his time. And why? 'The comprehensive sort of greatness [of the Renaissance, or even of the 19th century] is impossible in an age when moral confusion is pervasive, when characters are undecided, when thought is weak and the flux of things overwhelms it.' For the artist as such he held that modernist experiments and demonstrations 'cannot absolve an artist from the need of having an important [we may add, significant] subject matter and a sane humanity'. This is a modest expectation when one considers the Modernist Mafia everywhere, reducing art beyond, or below, the human scale. Consider the later work of Picasso, after 'Guernica', so much of contemporary American painting, let alone the express horrors of German Expressionism.

Nor had he much use for philosophy and philosophising — any more than the philosopher Wittgenstein had. Santayana regarded the real intellectual achievements of our age to be in science and in history. 'Every philosopher says that he is pursuing the truth, but this is seldom the case. Those who are genuinely concerned in discovering what happens to be true are rather the men of science, the naturalists, the historians. And ordinarily they discover it, according to their lights.'

Thus it is hardly surprising that, at the end of his long wandering, Santayana thought that he might have done better to have been an historian. It is true that his philosophy has a certain historical character, and he was a great respecter of tradition — of that of the Catholic Church, for example. Hence he exonerated the Catholic tradition in Germany from the burden resting upon the specifically German creed, which he traced back to the Reformation. Nor is it surprising that he regarded the historian as a more reliable interpreter of the historical scene. For a great historian can draw lessons for the future while preserving the story of the past.

# NANCY CUNARD AND HENRY MOORE

## by Walter Strachan

IT is now an incredible twenty-six years since Nancy Cunard the poet died in Paris, twelve since the publication of her biography. But I am still haunted by memories of a twenty-year friendship with her. Her fascinating personality springs to life before me whenever I dip into my collection of her letters, postcards, scraps of notes she left behind — some long and typed, some handwritten in ink, others dashed off in pencil.

I had been in correspondence with her during the summer of 1944. Although, reluctantly, she had turned down my poem 'Paris remembered' as too general for her antholgy *Poems for France,* she was enthusiastic about my English version of the sonnet by Péguy, 'Paris, Double Galère': 'Why not send it to my friend, John Mortimer of the *New Statesman*?' I did, and it was published in the 'liberation of Paris' issue. Nancy had also liked a translation I had sent her of Aragon's *Richard Coeur de Lion* and other poems by the lynch-pin of the intellectuals of the Resistance.

Then the postcard from 93 Jermyn Street, SW1 (one of the scores of addresses she was to write from), succinct but friendly: 'Café Royal, Regent Street, at 6.15 p.m. Ed. in the big café on ground floor.

My *signalement:* Old beige large coat with high fur collar. Will this suit? Work makes everything impossible! But look forward to meeting you. N.C.'

If, aged 49, she could no longer be the stunning beauty of the 'twenties, no war-time old coat could hide her slim elegance, nor deflect one's gaze from those intense blue eyes.

Over a simple lager — not as I soon learnt, her usual drink — a discussion on how best we francophile writers and educators (as schoolmaster and poet I was both) could help France. The ivory bangles that clothed her arms rattled as she gesticulated. She offered to help me contact the poets whom she knew personally and whose poems I wanted to translate, and place in reviews. Nancy had already informed her fellow-writer, Cecily Mackworth, of my projected anthology of — chiefly — poets connected with the Resistance, and she wanted to use several of the translations for her *Mirror for French Verse.* She introduced me to the poetry of Guillaume Apollinaire, suggested particular poems she would like for her book. 'I hope you are trying *Zone*'.

Around the time of our first encounter, Nancy had had disquieting news; her offices in Normandy — her hand-press (founded in 1928) — had been looted by the Nazis. Only a few books had survived intact; luckily Beckett's *Whoroscope,* and Ezra Pound's *Cantos* among them. We talked a lot about her press on the occasion of her first visit to us at Bishop's Stortford College. She was, surprisingly to me, fairly free — for that time — with four-letter words. Nancy was also charming with our two children and squatted on the floor and talked about their books.

After a wartime lunch on veal olives we discussed printing. She showed interest in the typographical exhibition I was preparing. Then, we discussed Virginia Woolf (I had written a sonnet on hearing of her suicide in 1941). Nancy returned to the subject in a letter two days later: 'having known Virginia... what I wanted to say was how she laughed when I said, in answer to the awful difficulty of understanding James Joyce, that she should read him with a good strong drink, perhaps even a little tight. What Stulik, of the Eiffel Tower restaurant, used to qualify as "hearing the anchells sing!".'

Nancy encouraged me to get as many translations as possible published in literary and other reviews. It would help to persuade Aragon — and other French poets — to give permission for book publication. The review *Adelphi*, published my translation of Aragon's *Plus belle que des larmes*, *Tribune* my version of his *Dunkerque*. I could now work confidently to the title *Apollinaire to Aragon*.

Meantime in that *annus mirabilis* peace was on its way. May 9 — VE Day — the unblacking of windows was a symbol of a return to light. Communications between this country and France were opening up. I was able to introduce to Nancy an old French literary friend, Madame Baudouin, who was trying to obtain permission to adapt J. M. Barrie plays for French TV. Nancy sent a hasty card: 'Here is news; Tristan Tzara is coming over to lecture on *Langage et Poésie* at the French Institute'. It gave me the chance of meeting the inventor of Dadaism, one of whose poems I had already translated. Nancy reported back from Paris (October 24): 'Compliments on your excellent translation of Tzara's most difficult poem. He showed it to me and I think he is very pleased'.

Nancy took the business of writing very seriously; her reports from Spain appeared in *The Guardian* and elsewhere. She was always talking about the PEN Club and all it was doing internationally for oppressed or censored authors. She was a great friend of its first secretary, Herman Ould who welcomed me as a member. Nancy, at the first dinner I attended, found me another francophile friend, the novelist Irene Rathbone. We met several times at the Café Royal. Nancy was enthusiastic about the Nice (PEN) Congress: 'munificent'. Cecily described her at the Venice Congress: 'Nancy looked very nice. She was staying at her cousin's (Victor) palazzo. She gave a splendid cocktail party. Day Lewis, Evelyn Waugh, Cyril Connolly and Auden were there...'. It represented a nostalgic return to her old social sphere, while in her letter to me about the strike of the Spanish bank employees: 'Strike, strike, people are always right to strike...'. She had sent a report on the plight of Spanish republicans in Franco's prisons. She was at home with ordinary people — she learned Russian from a chauffeur — and anyone, especially writers in distress. On one occasion I was able to help. At her request I had sent a copy of Thomson's *A City of Dreadful Night* to the poet, Joe Bousquet, who had been seriously wounded in the 1914-18 War. He was pathetically grateful. He wrote in English: (I quote from a longish letter) 'Will you receive, Sir, a thousand thanks, and never forget a dying man in Carcassonne who

is in love with England and the dearest Nancy Cunard, Yours faithfully, Joe.' I was moved to write a poem: 'The Grief of a Poet' (included in *Aragon to Apollinaire*).

Still under the sign of N.C. in December 1945, out of the blue, a long letter appeared from an American journalist working in Paris, Morris Gilbert: 'Miss Cunard', he writes, 'has told me of the interest instilled by you among your pupils about *Le Canard enchaîné*, and it struck me as so remarkable that I felt you would not mind if I wrote about this extraordinary paper, in case your students don't know the details...'. It was ten years later that she summed up this extension of her interest and affection: 'Do you know I have your boys constantly in mind — my book — that's some of the public I'd like.' The book was about her press, *These were the Hours* (published posthumously); poetry and printing books were her first love.

In 1947 (January 2nd) Nancy wrote to me from Paris: 'am demented at not having a place of my own to start anew, it's HELL!' Then I received a letter, dated November 16th, moderately triumphant: 'I now have a HOUSE, a nutshell, absolutely complete with every discomfort and inconvenience and a veritable network of fissures... My little old woman of the Lot totters about stone-deaf, competent, undeterrable.' Nancy expands on this 'character' in a later letter when she is confronted by an importunate tax-collector: 'Madame Achille had me in fits of laughter: *Allez vous emandouiller ailleurs! On a assez d'emerdements dans cette maison, sans cela!*' One can sympathize with her job of coping with Nancy's erratic hours, I heard her during my visit muttering in mild protest: *'Mais, ce n'est pas normal!'* This tumble-down house at Lamothe-Fénelon, some eight kilometres from Souillac in the Dordogne, became a guesthouse for Nancy's more intimate friends: Sylvia Townsend Warner, Irene Rathbone; also her new friends, Geraldine Balayé of *Radio-Toulouse* and the American journalist, Louise Morgan. Of course, on her general principle, Nancy lost no time in enlisting their interest in, respectively, my French translations broadcast from *Radio Toulouse-Hautes Pyrénées* and the calligraphy of my pupils, which appeared as a feature in *The New Chronicle*.

By this time *Apollinaire to Aragon* had reached Nancy... 'I read *Apollinaire to Aragon* with very real pleasure... in bed and in Meadow'. Nancy still paid visits to England. We met at PEN Club dinners. She continued to follow her political interests. She and Cecily Mackworth were assiduous attenders of PEN Congresses abroad.

As Henry Moore and his sculpture were very much in my mind since I had got to know him and had paid many visits to his studio, I would almost certainly have talked about him to Nancy. Her first mention of my proposal to take her over to Moore's house and studio was in a letter, dated May 2nd, 1949 when, unfortunately around that time she was beset with worries. Moore had his first one-man exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum in 1948. His stone carving, 'Three Standing Figures', had been Moore's important contribution to the first Battersea Park Exhibition of

open-air sculpture. But with so prolific an artist one was always sure to see some important work in progress. In any case no pretext was needed for this meeting of two minds. They had much in common; the rapport was immediate. She was one of the first, if not the first foreigner to visit 'Le Musée de l'Homme' in Paris since the end of hostilities and she had written an authoritative article on it, published in the prestigious *Burlington Magazine*. Henry was fascinated by the ivory bracelets that clothed her arms.

Subsequently Nancy stayed some days at the 'Red Lion' in Much Hadham from which Moore's studios were only a couple of miles but she did not like to disturb his work. I think her realization that she could never equal Edith Sitwell as a poet was responsible for her concentration on translation and the prose books she devoted respectively to her two heroes, George Moore, *Memories of George Moore* and Norman Douglas, *Grand Man*. Her two other books were concerned with her own work — *Those were the Hours* about her own Private Press. Her huge anthology — *Negro*, now a classic, though much derided at the time of its publication, was about African culture and examples of ivories she had done research on in English and foreign museums. She wrote to me from Bremen, December 9th, 1955 ... 'What did I see but a beautiful Henry Moore at Basle ...'. The same year she wrote: 'What pleasure you have given me making me know Henry Moore. He is lunching with me tomorrow' (rare for Moore to leave his work for a date!).

A 'ring' theme developed. First Nancy had read that the Cecil Rhodes Museum in Bishop's Stortford possesses Lobengula's ring originally given to Queen Victoria by the chief of the Mattebele tribe. Our rendezvous was the museum. She was anxious to have a drawing of it by one of my pupils. I had just such a talented boy available, Christopher Hewett, (later owner of a London gallery). Nancy was delighted and showed it to Moore since it resembled the point of a Sarsen stone she treasured 'with two holes in its blessed feet'. (Moore's explorations with holes through sculptural forms was a controversial topic at the time.)

In a letter, July 24th, 1964, at a time when her health, but not her will was deteriorating, she wrote (in consecutive sentences): 'I am so ILL all the time. Let's not enumerate again on my ills, I have a lovely ring for Henry Moore that even *he*, probably cannot have seen the likes of ... in stone, Stonehenge period'. A friend collected it and got it to Moore's studio.

He wrote to me on September 8th, 1964: 'We have only been back a few days from our holiday in France ... we went on to Les Eyzies looking at the cave art. I didn't realize that perhaps we weren't terribly far from Nancy Cunard's house. However, we were with friends in their car ... so perhaps we couldn't have called on her anyhow. I have written her a short note. I didn't say anything about the ring because I didn't quite know what to say ... I have merely sent our hopes that she will soon be better.'

Nancy's mental energy was in no way impaired. She had embarked on a long narrative poem — a far cry from the poem 'Parallax', her most

avant-garde poem which Virginia Woolf had published on her Hogarth Press in 1925. But, in all her questions about metres and scansion, I joined in her nostalgic game. It was an evocation of her childhood days at St. Pertinhall. On a postcard written in the Villa Pomone, she is at her most intense: 'I am uplifted by the thought of living in England'. She indulges in black humour about her fractured hip. Her last ever postcard to me was dated February 27th, 1965. She died in a Paris hospital in March that same year. Even in desperate pain, her habit of helping on work by others did not desert her. If I needed any help in connection with all my 'beaux livres' articles, I should get in touch with Raymond Michelet (she adds his address). He used to work at the Hours Press. I find this last message unbearably touching.

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[Walter Strachan has produced three collections of his own poetry as well as translating books from French, German and Italian. For his books on art, he was created a 'Chevalier des Arts et Lettres' by the French government in 1969.]

# Literary Supplement

## TUDOR MATRIARCH

*The King's Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort.* M. K. Jones and M. G. Underwood. Cambridge University Press. Illustrated, 322pp. £35.00.

At last we have an entirely satisfactory biography of Lady Margaret Beaufort, to whom Henry VII owed his throne. From this it is clear that she was one of the most influential women in our history, but we did not know enough about her. Many people may remember her ascetic, but very wide-awake features from her tomb in Westminster Abbey. She is very much to the fore at Cambridge, where she was the foundress of Christ's College and St. John's; and she also founded the Lady Margaret professorships at Cambridge and Oxford.

These things keep her memory alive; but who was she, and what did she do that was so decisive politically?

She was the ultimate residuary legatee of John of Gaunt's Beaufort family, which had been legitimised by Act of Parliament. They were an able lot, with a Cardinal in the family, and she inherited her full share of their ability. As a great heiress, a grand marriage was found for her, to Edmund Tudor, half-brother of Henry VI. At the age of fourteen she produced her only child — a difficult child-birth, there were no more children, and her husband had died six months before. This concentrated her affection upon the boy who was a last sprig of the Lancastrian royal house. She made his interets her constant care, though she could see little of him during the Yorkist reign of Edward IV. Young Henry was kept under careful watch and ward in Wales.

Margaret's second marriage to a young Stafford was happy; they trod very carefully, keeping in with a Yorkist king. A third marriage to the head of the Stanleys extended her wealth and family influence. Edward IV's temporary loss of the throne and brief return of Henry VI raised hopes. But Edward was bent on extirpating the Lancastrian house, killing Henry VI in the Tower and the Prince of Wales at Tewkesbury. Edward broke solemn promises right and left, and now Margaret urged her son to flee abroad and trust to no promises from Edward. There had already been talk of marrying Henry to Edward's eldest daughter, Elizabeth.

There would have been no chance of his coming to the throne but for Richard's usurpation. In July 1483 Margaret joined with the Woodvilles in an attempt to rescue Richard's nephews from the Tower. It failed, but this must have decided Richard to make away with them in August. Margaret was in dire danger; only the influence of her cautious Stanley husband saved her. But it was 'the slaughter' of Edward's boys that opened up the chance for Henry, and Margaret grasped it. Marry him to Elizabeth, now the heiress of York, was in a way the obvious solution to the crisis posed by Richard. And so it came about after Bosworth.

At Henry's coronation Margaret was in tears, it was noticed, not of joy but because she feared further 'adversity'. With the disadvantage of hindsight we tend to think that the union of Lancaster and York brought security. But this book brings home how insecure things were, and how hard Henry and his mother had to work to keep things steady — rather like George VI and his Queen after the crisis of the Abdication.

Margaret treated herself as a Queen Mother, using the royal 'we', accompanying Henry everywhere on his tours to acquaint people with the returned exile. They made the most of their relationship to the royal saint, and tried hard to get Henry VI canonised — it would have been a great help to the dynasty.

She was now a great power in the land. She did not run the government — Henry was careful to keep power to himself — but she carved out her own role. Her wealth and estates were much increased, and she took the closest interest in their administration. She encouraged reclamation in the Fenlands and built a sluice at Boston to improve the harbour works. Building and repairs went forward, at her City residence, Coldharbour; in the country at Collyweston in Northamptonshire, the large manor house which the authors call a 'palace'.

They show how keen she was to exact all her rights and increase the returns on her holdings. The tough little woman had a good business head, and if she took advantage of her status it was only what others had done against her. In her case it was to finance her widespread benefactions and charities, her personal interest in education, her religious foundations. There were all the marriages she arranged, the able young men whose careers she forwarded — Sir Reginald Bray, bishops Oldham and Fisher.

In addition were all the families she helped, the instances of personal kindness. In three outstanding cases she even withstood her son and the Crown's interests to aid families in trouble. One of these, Lord Morley, paid tribute to her character, to her courage and patience: 'albeit that in King Richard's days she was oft in jeopardy of her life. Yet she bore patiently all trouble in such wise that it is wonder to think it.' Of course it was all in the game, to prop up her son's throne, but how hard she must have worked at it on top of all her religious devotions. For she was as pious as she was politic.

A. L. ROWSE

## A PASTOR AND A MARTYR

*A Spoke in the Wheel: the Life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.* Renate Wind. SCM Press. £6.95.

The title of the book comes from a lecture given by Dietrich Bonhoeffer to a group of Berlin pastors after Hitler came to power in 1933. He argued that when the State infringes basic human rights three courses of action are open to the Christian Church. It can challenge the State on the legitimacy of its actions. It can aid the victims of State injustice, whether Christians or not. And it may 'not just bandage the victims under the wheel, but put a spoke in the wheel itself'.

Twelve years later Bonhoeffer was martyred because he joined in the bid to 'put a spoke in the wheel' by overthrowing the Nazi State, which (as events proved) meant ensuring Hitler was killed. Although not a major partner on the civilian wing of the coup that failed — it was much more than an army plot — he was heart and soul with the conspirators and a considerable intellectual and spiritual influence among them.

Renate Wind's short biography (translated by John Bowden) is an easier introduction to Bonhoeffer than much of what has appeared about him, or the collections of his work which mix the profound and the inconsequential. The author, a pastor from Heidelberg, has some rather decided views on matters long after Bonhoeffer's time. She has a background in the Christian Peace Conference (often criticised for Communist connections) and is clearly at odds

with Conservative tendencies in German politics and conservative ones in the German Church. But her interpretations of the 1930s and her modern instances only serve to emphasise what a reluctant and even unlikely rebel Bonhoeffer was, a loner of rather conservative temperament and tastes who had a knack of getting to the heart of the matter, as he did very early in response to Nazi persecution of the Jews.

Perhaps the book leaves important questions unresolved. Bonhoeffer was already a rising theologian when he rejected the soft option of an American academe and returned to hazard and death, hanged at the end of the war in a last pointless spasm of Nazi vengeance. But how much of his fame reflects a desperate urge, and not only in German Protestantism, to find uncompromised heroes? How would Bonhoeffer himself have reacted to the way some of his thoughts about 'religionless Christianity' and humanity's coming of age have been posthumously promoted to (in Dr. Wind's phrase) the 'breathtaking beginning a new theology'?

The tragedy of the 1944 plot, on its civilian side, was that failure meant the death of many of those whose talents were better suited to guiding a new Germany than overthrowing a dictator. Bonhoeffer was one of them. But it is surely a mistake to assume that his theology would not have developed — perhaps as Reinhold Niebuhr's did in America — as the West struggled to come to terms with material success, nuclear perils, and Communist totalitarianism.

R. D. KERNOHAN

## CHRISTIANS AND THE COLD WAR

*Archbishop Fisher — His Life and Times.* Edward Carpenter. The Canterbury Press. Norwich. £35.00. *The Christian Church in the Cold War.* Owen Chadwick. Allen Lane the Penguin Press. £18.99.

In his biography of Geoffrey Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1945 to 1961, Edward Carpenter, formerly Dean of Westminster has produced a 'magisterial' biography in the Victorian manner. Its 840 pages and its detached, balanced approach mark it as a biography in the grand tradition.

While Geoffrey Fisher lacked the charisma of Lincoln's Edward King, admittedly a saint, or the brilliance of Fisher's successor, Michael Ramsay, he was a far better archbishop than Ramsay though less of a theologian. He was a superb organiser and administrator: he had been, after all, headmaster of Repton. He was also a man of deep faith. His career in the Church is not the stuff of which great legends are made: Oxford, headmaster, bishop, archbishop. He may not sparkle and there may be no 'real man' exposed here for the psychologists to analyse. (The author only devotes 125 pages to Fisher's life before his elevation to Canterbury.) Yet there are occasionally touches that do illuminate: in 1944, Fisher, then Bishop of London, heard of the death of William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury. Though he was in the Robing Room of the House of Lords, his first action was to kneel by one of the chairs where he remained in prayer for an hour. Once, when Archbishop, he joined his wife and some of the choristers from Canterbury Cathedral for afternoon tea in his pyjamas: his excuse was that Oxford's defeat in the University Boat Race had so depressed him that he had stayed in bed all day.

To most people Archbishop Fisher will be remembered as the man who crowned the Queen in 1953 and who told Princess Margaret that she could not marry Group Captain Townsend. (The latter story is confirmed as being quite untrue: the decision was the Princess's alone.) But Geoffrey Fisher's time at Lambeth was marked by many extremely important events: it was he who

built up colonial churches into self-governing members of the Anglican Communion. It was he who laboured, often in the face of appalling bigotry, to establish better relations with the Roman Catholic Church in England. It was he who went on a world pilgrimage to visit Patriarchs of the Orthodox Churches and it was he who became the first Archbishop of Canterbury since the sixteenth century to visit the Pope. His vision of Christian reunion may appear now to have been limited: as something of a Broad Churchman he tended to adhere to the old view of a 'Communion of Communions'. If so this must not lessen his achievement, especially when we consider the odds against him. Indeed, his work may have been all the more successful because of his known views. His orderly mind was also seen at its best when faced with the uncanonical ordination of women as priests: it was a question of church order and discipline, not theology. Even after fifty years of debate few grasp this point. The chapters relating to Fisher's work for Christian reunion make fascinating reading.

While some of the chapters are rather short and while one may regret the lack of notes, one cannot but admire a true work of scholarship, well written and well produced.

Owen Chadwick's history of the Christian Church is volume seven in The Penguin History of the Church, edited by Owen Chadwick who also wrote the volume on the Reformation. Its 230 pages make it seem a light-weight in relation to Edward Carpenter's biography. The book accomplishes its object in providing a survey of the Christian Church — by which is meant the Church in Europe — in the years after 1945. The book is divided into sections on Eastern and Western Europe and most chapters are devoted to themes rather than to individuals or countries. The mammoth field to be covered perhaps explains why the book reads in many parts more as notes than finished text. One appreciates that the book is dedicated, in part, to Michael Bordeaux whose Keston College did so much to point out the evils of Communism while others in the West wished them left unmentioned. One cannot but wonder why the volume was not written by Michael Bordeaux.

JAMES MUNSON

## A ROUGH OLD TRADE

*A Conservative Coup.* Alan Watkins. Duckworth. £14.99.

The political columnist of *The Observer* describes here in dramatic blow-by-blow detail the 36 hours in November 1990: in which a Prime Minister in good health and with a substantial majority in the House was removed from office by her own supporters, most of whom owed their Cabinet jobs to her choosing.

Watkins writes incisively and with much acid in his pen-portraits. Not all his dramatis personae will always recognise, or welcome, his descriptions. 'Mr. Ridley seemed to have been intended by nature to be an evictor of widows and oppressor of orphans'. 'While Mr. Lawson looked on the world as a philosopher or mathematician, seeking the flash of an inspired generalisation, Sir Geoffrey Howe plodded through life as a painstaking lawyer.' 'Mrs. Thatcher possessed two methods of discourse, denial and assertion. It was a mistake to believe, as many did, that Mrs. Thatcher's style of politics was founded on a fondness for facts and distrust of vagueness and generalisation. On the contrary, it was a form of bullying.'

This is a piece of higher journalism rooted in detailed knowledge of the players and of the play; it is readable and meaty. Watkins sees two of Mrs. Thatcher's achievements as unchallengeable: the sale of council houses and the

reform of the trades unions. Mrs. Thatcher herself was always kindly, frugal and in her own way modest. But for Watkins a decline in her standing began with the City crash and the inflation of autumn 1987; it was compounded by the poll tax, in which too many hands — too many of them amateur and academic — were working at the pump; and climaxed with her stridency in the House on Europe, which for Sir Geoffrey Howe became an occasion for bitterness and resignation. (Why, however, did he hang on so long? And why did she not replace Sir Geoffrey by Douglas Hurd much earlier?).

Conspiracy is, in fact, easier now than ever before, aided and abetted by too many small dining clubs, with journalists as well as MPs as members, all eagerly fanning each other's ambitions, rich in rumour and intrigue, all hot for the publicity that is mother's milk to politicians. Moreover, most of the personalities here clinically exposed, were youngish men; the elder statesmen of the party were no longer active on the scene, and of those who might have served as moderators too many were nursing their hurts, or were just absentees. Too many of the men Mrs. Thatcher had appointed were too greedy for a temporary fame in a TV spotlight to remember that loyalty is the most valuable, and today one of the rarest, qualities in politics. Whatever the fashions and the style that the media imposed on all three parties in the recent election, it is clear that British politics is not presidential but prime ministerial; and that among a Caesar's selected colleagues many are keen to play the role of Brutus. And in November 1990 it was a close-run thing. More than that: those who are English had best be on their guard against the Scots and the Welsh.

ESMOND WRIGHT

## VERY ROUGH JUSTICE

*Scapegoat.* John Parris. Duckworth. £14.95.

Not at any time, in any way, could Mr. Parris have been considered a conventional member of the English Bar. His rebellious, not to say maverick, spirit made him the perfect, albeit serendipitous, choice as defence barrister for young 'Let-Him-Have-It' Chris Craig, indicted with Derek Bentley for the shooting of Police Constable Sidney Miles on a Croydon warehouse roof in November 1952.

The hanging of the dull, very dull (I.Q. 66), epileptic, nineteen-year-old Bentley, who was in fact in police custody anyway at the time of the murder, greatly upset a public who understood not the law relating to accomplices and the joint liability thereof. The disquiet has lingered on for forty years, and led to a Craig-Bentley 'industry', to which, as the last surviving barrister in the case, Mr. Parris' contribution might be expected to be crucial. It is not. It supplies little more than a first-hand — and to that extent a further and necessarily better informed — replay of the tale told in Francis Selwyn's *Gangland* (1988), Christopher Berry-Dee and Robin Odell's *Dad Help Me Please* (1990), and M. J. Trow's *'Let Him Have It, Chris'* (1990). But it is Mr. Parris' learned opinions concerning the British legal system — especially in the matter of criminal justice — in general, and the Bench and Bar of the 1950s in particular, which give his book a curious additional dimension.

Beneath the stuff of his gown, Mr. Parris' shoulders were patently not without chips. In fact, he had chips with everything. And there were wigs on the green! 'Most Londoners believe civilization ends at Potters Bar... The Provincial Bar was despised and treated with contempt by all the Oxbridge types who occupied subsidised chambers in the Inns of Court (and) lunched or dined every day with the judges'. And that despite the fact that there were

'old Etonians and Harrovians and... other snobs on our (North Eastern) circuit'.

Harken, then, to some of former learned counsel's quill-notes on his brethren. Goddard, L.C.J. comes in for the severest drubbing; a crypto-semite, closet flogger, rampant and rampageous sadist. As pleased and waggish as a dog with two tails — or a cat with nine — at a hanging or a flogging. 'His clerk, Arthur Smith, told me he used to take a spare pair of striped trousers round for Goddard' — when the old gentleman was sentencing the young to the birch, cat or scaffold. This, like what the soldier said, is not evidence.

Hallett, J. 'So clever and conscious of his cleverness that his particular pleasure was to expose any counsel before him as bloody fools.'

Oliver, J. 'Another who terrorised the Bar,' and was 'cold and deadly to the defence on all occasions, and whose summings-up were rich in venom against any accused.'

Stable, J. is said to have imposed a mere three-month sentence for motor manslaughter because he had driven a car often himself when in a state of eft-like inebriety.

Croom-Johnson, J. *(père pas fils)* 'Apart from Goddard, the supreme Bully on the Bench... a bastard... A small man whose delight and mission in life were to try to make big men look small.'

Christmas Humphreys, of counsel, does not escape. He is overheard in the robing room saying of Mr. Parris in a tone of contempt: 'Oh, he's some young chap who's not been called long. I suppose he's got the brief (for Craig) because he's some relation of the Croydon solicitors'. Untrue.

Director of the Metropolitan Police Laboratory at New Scotland Yard, Lewis Charles Nickolls 'would say anything the police wanted him to say and would co-operate with them in fabricating evidence against the accused'.

And, of the Home Secretary himself: 'The man was a complete bloody fool' (Churchill), 'Stupid' (Harold Macmillan), 'Extremely stupid' (Parris). While Hylton-Foster, Q.C., contributes:

*The nearest thing to death in life*
*Is David Patrick Maxwell Fyfe.*

It was his moral cowardice — fear of Goddard, Churchill, the Cabinet and the police — that denied Bentley a reprieve.

Sick of it all, shouldering for the last time his red bag, Mr. Parris turned his back upon 'what are humorously referred to as "The Royal Courts of Justice" in the Strand'. He has presented us with a scandalously compulsive read and a most worrying clue to the Craig-Bentley affair as supplied in the case of R v. Appleby, where the precise words, 'Let him have it...' had been previously and fatally articulated.

RICHARD WHITTINGTON-EGAN

## SHORTER REVIEWS

**The Miracle that Was Macedonia.** (Sidgwick & Jackson. £25.) Professor G. L. Hammond, former President of the Hellenic Society and Chairman of the Athens School of Archaeology, has written an inspiring history of Macedonia incorporating many recent discoveries about that small nation whose pioneering skills in the arts reached far beyond Greece and its European neighbours. Its political expertise has long been known, its successful form of constitutional monarchy recognised along with the part it played in uniting the Greek City States. The author's first-hand experience of the area and its people in war and peace shines through. In 1938

he identified the site at Vergina of Aegeae, the ancient capital, where its treasures — not Greek derivatives, as had been assumed, but native in style — were uncovered in royal tombs and buildings. So lucid is the book that it may be enjoyed even without previous knowledge of its subject. Especially noteworthy are biographical details of Alexander the Great's character and conquests; his desire for reconciliation between warring nations contrasting with a passionate desire for glory; the extent to which his quality of tolerance was simply a natural attribute of Macedonians. After his early death at 32 the diffusion of Macedonian culture continued unchecked, based as it was on the artistic achievements and civilising power of its people. Thirty-two pages of photographed artefacts and several important maps reinforce the excellence of this book. It is the third of Sidgwick & Jackson's Great Civilizations series.

**Against a Federal Europe: The Battle for Britain** (Duckworth. £7.99). The author of this fascinating short book (133 pages) is William Cash, Conservative MP for Stafford. He was member of the Commons Select Committee on European Legislation and this vantage point enabled him to see the spreading power of the EEC. What started as a common market to spread the freer exchange of goods and services has *pari passu* become, at least to its supporters and those who earn a living from it, a new nation in all but name. The writer is open in his fear and dislike of what is happening. Apart from that, his examination of the issues and of the future is balanced, well-researched and worth reading. He is very good at pointing out that behind the rhetoric are hard facts, the hardest of all is the fact of German dominance within the EEC. The more united 'Europe' becomes the more dominant Germany grows. The more Great Britain turns her back on that English-speaking world that she created in America and the Dominions the less her standing will be in the world and the poorer the world will be for it.

**British Politics and the Great War Coalition and Conflict 1915-1918** (Yale University Press. £30). One of the most interesting aspects of the Liberal governments from 1906-16 is their fascination for historians. For years they were regarded by academics as remarkable in achievement and brilliance. Now they are seen as shabby and opportunist: nineteenth century men playing twentieth century games. John Turner's book on the displacement of the alcoholic Asquith by the Welsh solicitor, Lloyd George, and the prosecution of the War by the new coalition government, is another weighty academic history to add to those already written, not all of which are acknowledged in the Bibliography. It is slightly odd that neither the Gainford nor the Ponsonby MSS was examined; the index could be slightly fuller. One wonders if 'box plots' really aid our understanding of the 1918 election or if being told that $y = a + bx + c$ adds to man's store of historical knowledge. Perhaps it is just an academic fad. For a detailed account of 'high politics' at this crucial time in British history Mr. Turner's is a valuable contribution.

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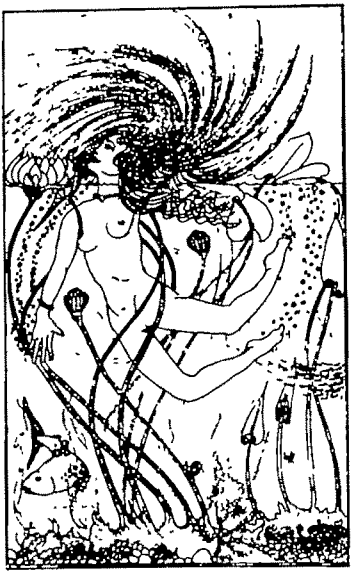

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